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The Nation.

March 6, 1982 $1.25

EDITORIAL

DECLARING SECRET WAR

So it is to be war against the "imperialists" and "colonialists" in Central America and the Caribbean. Its declaration came not from Moscow or Havana but from, of all places, Washington. The podium was provided by the Organization of American States.

Haig's war down there has become Reagan's; never mind that in the opinion of Weinberger and the generals our chances of winning are nil. Although the President didn't send in the Marines, in his February 24 speech he dramatically signaled the beginning of a war of covert action. The toughest U.S. interventionist policy since the Dulles brothers unleashed the Central Intelligence Agency on Guatemala in 1954 came concealed in a sugarcoating of "free trade" and aid ("market-oriented," of course).

The speech will be hailed by all our "friends" in Latin America (the right-wing military dictators of Chile, Argentina, et al.). It was clotted with attacks on the "totalitarian left" (i Nicaragua, among other places), on "Cuban-style Marxism-Leninism," on the "imperialistic" aims of the rebels in El Salvador.

Reagan's proposals mask his real policy, just as his statement last autumn on nuclear disarmament in Europe was intended to conceal an arms buildup, and to disarm only his critics at home and abroad. The tip-off was his declaration that he would ask Congress for more money for "increased security" in the Caribbean basin. That is a bold reference to the secret war against Cuba and its "colony," Nicaragua, which, as Saul Landau and Craig Nelson report on this page, is now under way.

Reagan has now made it clear that he means to repeat the Vietnam tragedy in our own hemisphere, but not, in Marx's formulation, "as farce." It will be an even worse tragedy if Congress lets him act it out.

MORAL SYMMETRY
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REAGAN (MIS)SPEAKS
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MAJORITY HISTORY
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DESTABILIZING NICARAGUA

THE C.I.A. RIDES AGAIN

SAUL LANDAU AND CRAIG NELSON

Q. Mr. President, have you approved of covert activity to destabilize the present government of Nicaragua?

A. Well, no, we're supporting them, the—oh, wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm sorry, I was thinking El Salvador, because of the previous, when you said Nicaragua. Here again, this is something upon which with national security interests, I just—I will not comment.

—President Reagan's press conference, February 18

A covert operation directed by the Central Intelligence Agency against the Sandinist government in Nicaragua is now under way. According to two people present at secret briefings held last November and December, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders told members of the Senate and House Select Committees on Intelligence that the C.I.A. is secretly providing training, money and weapons for former members of Gen. Anastasio Somoza's National Guard who are now carrying out armed incursions into Nicaragua from bases in Honduras. The funds are being funneled through friendly Latin American countries. Reagan Administration ambassador at large Vernon Walters has negotiated with the government of Argentina and with elements in the security forces of Venezuela, Colombia and Chile to cooperate with the C.I.A. in destabilizing the Nicaraguan government, and to act as U.S. surrogates in actions in other Central American countries. (*The Washington Post* reported on C.I.A. plans for a $19 million covert operation against Nicaragua in a front-page

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LETTERS.

WRITERS CONGRESSES AND THE C.P.

New York City

I'm sorry Alan Wald missed so much when he read the article on writers' unions [see Dave Lindorff and Margot Cohen, "Solidarity—Ever?" *The Nation*, Oct. 3, 1981]. In his essay ["Remembering the Answers," *The Nation*, Dec. 26, 1981], Wald comes perilously close to charging us with exhibiting any or all of the "superficial responses of evasion, amnesia and the creation of sentimental myths" because we didn't devote sufficient space to castigating the Communist Party for its hidden agendas at the Writers Congresses of the 1930s.

At least Wald notices that we mentioned the party's manipulativeness in its cultural activities. But then he accuses us of failing "to explain the precise political purpose of this manipulation." Rather than write some dry analysis of the party's cultural efforts, we gave two concrete examples: its abrupt dissolution of the John Reed Clubs, to which many aspiring young writers belonged, in favor of a more selective (and controllable) League of American Writers; and Kenneth Burke's experience at the first Congress in 1935, when John Howard Lawson and other party leaders attacked his speech mercilessly because it went against the party line.

Wald also accuses us of failing "even to mention that these Congresses created and enforced a certain type of cultural style on the left." This is simply untrue. I commend to Wald numerous paragraphs in the piece that stress that the effects of the party's cultural yoke are still felt among intellectuals today (just ask the organizers of the 1981 Writers Congress, who found some writers ready to believe that it too was a Communist Party front).

For some people, I guess, you cannot go too far in exorcising the party. Nothing will do, apparently, but flat-out damnation. Forget the examples and the recollections of those who lived through the period.

Actually, Cohen and I were not trying to write an article on the role of the Communist Party in writers' organizations. We were simply looking at the history of writers' attempts to organize, and what interested us, as far as the Communist Party was concerned, was how important such a driving force was for organizing efforts. Whatever damage the party may have done to the prewar writers' movement, we wanted to find out whether anything *at all* would have happened without it. The answer is unclear, so deep was the party's involvement in all the organizing among writers in those days.

We were concerned with this issue because, on the eve of last year's Writers Congress, an effort was again being made to organize writers into a formal trade union, and this time there was no Communist Party, or any other major group, working behind the scenes. Many of the organizers wondered whether the idea would catch on. In fact, it caught on beyond anyone's expectations: the Organizing Committee for a National Writers Union is now 2,000 members strong, and locals are forming throughout the country.

I'm tempted to respond to Wald's criticism about "superficial responses" by noting that the original piece Cohen and I wrote was cut by 50 percent because of space limitations, but the truth is I'm confident that the story was well told. There is one important idea that wasn't included because of space, however, and that was Stanley Aronowitz's observation that what wrecked the drive to organize writers in the 1930s was the effort to develop a Popular Front (the Communist Party's idea): "The whole idea of a Popular Front is against class movement. Writers' concerns with the larger sociopolitical issues of the Depression and the rise of fascism displaced their developing class concerns."

This time around, the effort seems to be focused on developing a writers' trade union—albeit a democratic and progressive one.

Dave Lindorff

WALD REPLIES

Ann Arbor, Mich.

I simply can't agree with Dave Lindorff's claim that the essay he wrote with Margot Cohen did, in fact, take up the issues that prompted my comments about the way the 1930s Writers Congresses were described in press coverage of the 1981 Congress.

My concerns were very precise: (*1*) The Popular Front among writers served in part to prevent liberals and radicals from recognizing the truth about the Moscow purge trials; my view is that this mass murder and repression, many of whose victims were writers, ought to be considered one of the greatest crimes of the twentieth century. (*2*) The oversimplified political ideology of the 1930s Congresses (that "progressive" elements of different classes should unite in a liberal program against "reaction") created a distinctive cultural style that aspired "to reach a mass audience on much the same terms as the commercial mass culture created by capitalism already did"; this orientation was contradictory and requires careful reexamination.

I find no mention of either of these pivotal concerns in Lindorff and Cohen's essay or in Lindorff's letter defending it.

I would like to think that the differences between Lindorff and myself are partly due to a misunderstanding and divergence of interests; he seems to feel that "party manipulativeness" is mainly what should be criticized, while my objection is to the broader ideology of the 1930s Congresses. In fact, I would agree with Stanley Aronowitz, who correctly notes that the strategy the Communists carried out among writers may ultimately have become an obstacle to the development of an authentic socialist movement and to the humanization of culture.

However, the fourth paragraph of Lindorff's letter, alleging that the real basis of my criticism is that I want nothing less than "flat-out damnation" of the Communist Party, suggests that the differences are actually deeper. I hope that open-minded readers of my essay will see that such a claim is unwarranted and unfair, and that I have no agreement with those who would simply reduce the tragic-heroic story of American Communism to its negative features. This ought to be clear from the admiration I expressed in my essay for Pete Seeger, in spite of David King Dunaway's portrait of him as a political simpleton with an inexplicable "blind spot" regarding Soviet oppression. (Here I might add that Seeger's appearance at the February 6 New York City rally in support of Poland's Solidarity seems to confirm my view that a Marxist theoretical analysis of the contradictory nature of Stalinism as a social system and hence as a worldwide political tendency to which artists bear complex relationships is preferable to the facile clichés that weaken Dunaway's book and the other books I discussed.)

But what most distresses me is that Lindorff simply amalgamates my important criticisms of *precise features* of Communist policy in the 1930s (which I offer from an anti-Stalinist but pro-Marxist point of view) with a perspective that could only be held by prejudiced and reactionary anti-Communists.

I would like to convince Lindorff that this mode of thinking is fruitless. It seems more important than ever that pro-working-class leftists of different political persuasions work together to re-examine past radical strategies in order to carry out the highest aspirations of our radical predecessors (Communist as well as anti-Stalinist Marxist). But in order to do this, the "amalgam" method of debate must be jettisoned, once and for all.

Alan Wald

AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a comprehensive biography and study of the life and work of Mary Heaton Vorse (1874-1966), I would appreciate hearing from anyone with recollections, letters or other personal insights into her life. All wishes for privacy will be respected.

Prof. Lora Garrison
320 Lawrence Avenue
Highland Park, N.J. 08904

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EDITORIALS.

Studs in Girard

We so often find ourselves sounding the alarm over new attacks on the First Amendment that it is a pleasure (unfortunately, a rare one) to report some hopeful signs. Recently there have been several.

Studs Terkel, the jaunty chronicler of the lives of common people, journeyed to Girard, Pennsylvania, a few weeks ago to confront some of those people, who complained about his book *Working* being assigned to high school seniors. In a dramatic appearance at a student assembly he won two standing ovations, according to *The New York Times*, and "deafening applause." Subsequently, he received the letter from the Girard High School junior class reproduced below. The students' response shows that the "youth of today," at least, have a sense of "what America is truly about," and it is eloquent testimony to the power of free speech in action, at least when the speaker is Studs Terkel.

In this one community, censorship was stopped dead in its tracks. Though Terkel himself, and the media attention he brought to Girard, played a deciding role in the drama, we should not ignore the performance of a local teacher and the school's principal, who stood firm, and the support given by the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers, which reminded the school board that academic freedom was guaranteed by the teachers' contract. In short, those who predict—whether gleefully or gloomily—a return to the fear-laden conformity generated during the last cold war are making an assumption that may turn out to be unwarranted—that the lessons of McCarthyism have not been learned.

Our most powerful mainstream institutions have yet to be tested this time around. We are encouraged, however, by the unflagging zeal of the current generation of civil liberties

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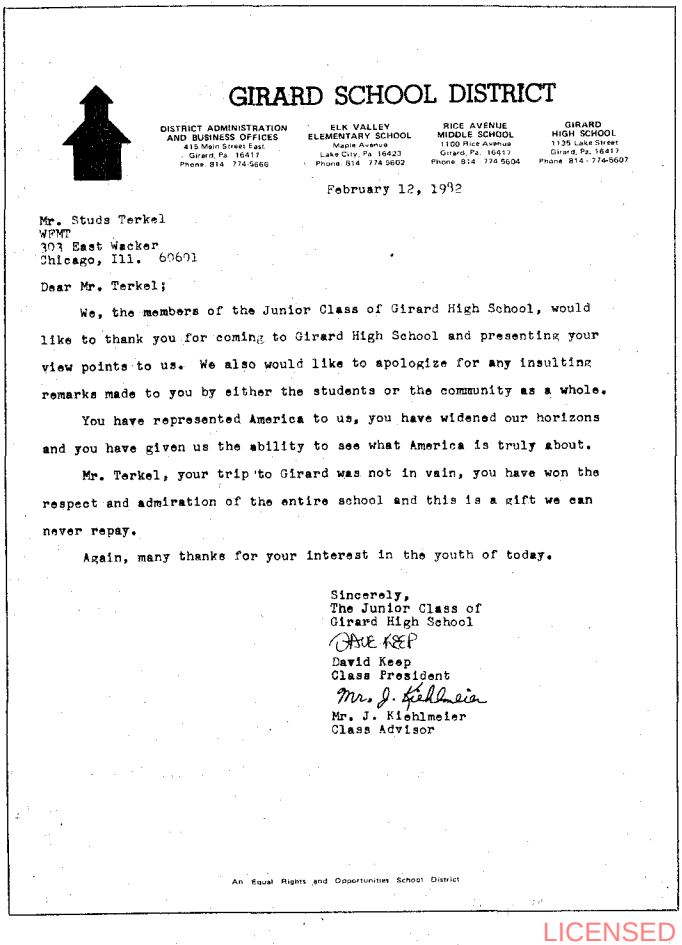
organizations, groups like the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, the National Lawyers Guild and the Center for Constitutional Rights. Although these groups have had, and no doubt will continue to have, their differences [see editorial, "Hanging Together," *The Nation*, November 7, 1981], their willingness to work together is something else that distinguishes the current period from the last cold war.

Corliss Lamont, for example, who helped found the N.E.C.L.C. because of the perception that the A.C.L.U. was not adequately representing all political victims of McCarthyism, has once again become an active supporter of the post-cold-war A.C.L.U. (Incidentally, Lamont's recent book, *Yes to Life* [Horizon], which provides a revealing view of past battles on the left, should be read by anyone interested in the history of civil liberties.) Thus it is propitious that the successful effort to stop the Treasury Department from impounding Cuban periodicals [see editorial, "*Nation* v. *Haig*," *The Nation*, February 13] derived from meetings instigated by the N.E.C.L.C. and a lawsuit brought by the organizations named earlier on behalf of a score of plaintiffs.

One of the reasons history doesn't repeat itself is that its lessons can be learned. We are not of course saying that civil liberties in this country are secure. In fact, all too often the lesson is that correct lessons are rarely learned. That's why we hope that Studs Terkel's journey to Girard, and his reception by the younger generation there, is a favorable augury rather than an exception.



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February 12, 1982

Mr. Studs Terkel
WFMT
303 East Wacker
Chicago, Ill. 60601

Dear Mr. Terkel;

We, the members of the Junior Class of Girard High School, would like to thank you for coming to Girard High School and presenting your view points to us. We also would like to apologize for any insulting remarks made to you by either the students or the community as a whole.

You have represented America to us, you have widened our horizons and you have given us the ability to see what America is truly about.

Mr. Terkel, your trip to Girard was not in vain, you have won the respect and admiration of the entire school and this is a gift we can never repay.

Again, many thanks for your interest in the youth of today.

Sincerely,
The Junior Class of
Girard High School
Dave Keep
David Keep
Class President
Mr. J. Kiehlmeier
Mr. J. Kiehlmeier
Class Advisor

An Equal Rights and Opportunities School District

The Olympic Game

If Los Angeles police chief Daryl Gates had his way, the slogan of the 1984 Olympics would be "terrorism" rather than "brotherhood." On January 21, Gates released an "unvarnished" L.A.P.D. report alleging the existence of a Soviet plot to disrupt the 1984 games with "criminals and terrorists" disguised as Russian Jewish immigrants.

Using the catchy headline "Soviet Emigré 'Mafia,'" the report said:

> Due to the advanced state of forensic psychology and psychiatry in the Soviet Union, many knowledgeable people are of the opinion that the Soviets are selecting dangerous criminals and sending them to the United States as refugees via the Jewish Immigration Quota. . . . Intelligence agents and spies are infiltrating in the same way.

Gates implied that Los Angeles's large Russian Jewish community is a window of vulnerability. According to the report:

> The Soviets apparently believe the 1984 Olympic Games offer an opportunity to embarrass the United States. The Soviet news agency Tass has already characterized Los Angeles as crime-ridden and smog-beset and has hinted some disaster might befall the games. It is easy to see how the Soviets might try to make their prediction a reality by planning criminal or terrorist activity that would affect the games.

To counter the Soviet threat, Gates proposed that his department's intelligence unit be beefed up: "Intelligence resources could have considerable impact upon the success of law enforcement's efforts during the Olympic Games." In short, taking a leaf from the Reagan Administration's book, Gates evoked the terrorism bogey in order to increase his department's appropriations.

Fortunately, the scare tactics backfired. Not only was criticism from the city's Jewish community swift and harsh but the president of the police commission severely upbraided the chief for "crying wolf." Joining the chorus was the president of the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, Peter C. Ueberroth, who expressed concern that the episode "will cause a whole damper on our committee's relations with the Soviets." Gates, caught with his pants down, backtracked, admitting there was no evidence to support the allegations. But, he insisted, Americans are "very naïve" and need "worst-case" scenarios to goad them into preparedness.

Another reason why Gates plunged in so hastily is that there is a jurisdictional feud between the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the L.A.P.D. and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office over which agency will control intelligence operations during the Olympics. Chief Gates probably thought he could get the jump on his rivals. Instead, he was called back for a false start.

GREG GOLDIN

Greg Goldin is a freelance writer who lives in Los Angeles, home of the 1984 Olympics.

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Moral Symmetry

Establishing a moral relationship with reality becomes an almost unbearable burden. But it is the only way to be a decent person. I think Jean-Paul Sartre had to face the dilemmas presented by the moral relationship several times in his life. Sartre fought for each of the causes that his respect for the dignity of man required. This placed him in the same trenches, or at least on the same platform, with his enemies, and in opposition to those who were his friends. Admired by all, he was almost always alone.

He hurled himself into battles without establishing priorities. These days, how is it possible to establish priorities in a moral relationship with the world? Is El Salvador more urgent than Poland; Poland than Guatemala; Guatemala than Uruguay; Uruguay than Lithuania; Lithuania than Argentina; Argentina than Lebanon; Lebanon than Rumania; Rumania than Paraguay?

An example: the Argentine military dictatorship is organizing, with advice from the United States, a military expedition to Central America. It has already begun sending paramilitary units to Honduras which will attempt to enter Nicaragua and destabilize the Sandinist regime. Will the massacre that results be any less in magnitude, political importance, the suppression of ideas and human extermination than that which is occurring in Poland? Martial law was established in Poland nearly three months ago; it was established in Paraguay twenty-five years ago.

There is no way to make a choice. We are obliged to enter every battle, and to leave the hypocrisy of formulating priorities and compensations, pragmatics and symmetries, in the hands of Reagan and Brezhnev, Kirkpatrick and Gromyko, Jaruzelski and Pinochet, Norman Podhoretz and Julio Cortázar.

In a speech on cultural genocide in Latin America, Cortázar, an Argentine writer who has lived for twenty years in Paris, said that the growth of illiteracy in the countries of Latin America was a form of cultural genocide. He pointed to but one exception: Cuba. The literacy campaign in Cuba has transformed it into the Latin American country with the highest percentage of inhabitants who can read and write. Cortázar did not mention the list of books and authors banned in Cuba; nor did he speak of Communist censorship in Cuba, which has made Cubans the worst-informed and most uncultured literates in the world. Such a situation draws a ritual denunciation from Podhoretz, though he does not believe that his own magazine, *Commentary*, a publication "dedicated" to humanism and culture, should dedicate a few lines to denouncing an act of genocide against journalists—the disappearance of 100 journalists in Argentina after they had been arrested by the military.

Every example leads us to the same conclusion: reality is asymmetrical, and honesty—such as that of Susan Sontag in her speech to the Solidarity rally in Town Hall on February 6—can be alienating.

In 1937, a young socialist Zionist left a Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz in Palestine. He said simply, "My conscience is here, but my heart is in Madrid." And he joined the troops of Gen. José Miaja.

Life on the democratic left during the last fifty years has been terribly difficult. It continues to be. But the honesty of the democratic left is above every suspicion or doubt or our own errors. To seek a settling of accounts is an act of desperation, of anguish or of exhaustion. It has nothing to do with political analysis, nor with ideological definitions.

I believe that Sontag has expressed her anguish. The right will turn her cry of anguish into a tribunal that sits in judgment on the left. It would be stupid for the left to give validity to this tribunal. It would also be stupid to hold that Sontag has no right to her desperation.

The struggle for a democratic world is harder today than it has ever been. To be forever caught between two fires—Communism and fascism—is a traumatic and alienating experience. But let us at least be certain that each of the enemies of democracy is defined by its own ideology. We don't need semantic adventures in search of new definitions in order to identify the enemy. Communism is an enemy because it is Communism, not because it has borrowed from the fascist arsenal. And fascism is what it is, even though Mussolini started as a socialist and Hitler spoke in the name of National Socialism.

Let us at least establish a difference. Any citizen can survive under a Communist regime if he alienates himself totally from reality. Under a fascist regime, however, a Jew, even when he chooses to be a fascist, will be sent to the gas chamber. This difference alone is enough to keep us from having to engage in semantic adventures.

Understanding the suppression of liberties in Poland does not require an enumeration of the tactics utilized by the Jaruzelski regime to impose martial law. The peasants of El Salvador, the *desaparecidos* in Argentina, the inhabitants of the Russian gulag, would be more than pleased if these were their only problems. It is true, as Sontag says, that the Polish regime invented new forms of repression. But these forms are not what defines the regime. Nor is it the horror that defines the policy. Sontag might ask an Argentine girl who had a hot iron forced into her vagina in a military prison what she thinks about repression in Poland in terms of horror. She would laugh.

The definitions that move us on the left are of another kind. In Poland, violent repression is being exercised against the people. It is the only possible definition of the situation, and the only one that leads me to support the Polish people. Solidarity represents the Polish people's democratic aspirations, their desire to create a democratic society. That is the only reason for my support of Solidarity. I do not need guarantees that the Polish people will abandon their anti-Semitism, which has always existed to some degree. I do not need guarantees that if Solidarity gains power it will never permit an antidemocratic, sectarian bureaucracy to rule.

Nor do I need guarantees that the Polish people will agree one day to help the Chilean people. I have never been able to get one of the Soviet dissidents living in Israel to join the democratic struggle there. What happens in Latin America

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cannot matter much to Solidarity. But this kind of moral accouting I leave to the right, so that it can continue to entertain itself with its scheme of authoritarian and totalitarian governments, its search for the perfect symmetry.

In Argentina and Chile there has developed over the last few years a campaign of extermination against the democratic elements. Repression in Poland; extermination in Argentina and Chile; genocide in El Salvador, Guatemala and South Africa. And if we devote our energies to these peoples' battles, we neither have nor ask for a guarantee that the battles will be won, that if new governments emerge they will not embark on policies contrary to our democratic sentiments—as has happened in Cuba. Today, Cuba is, simply, an enemy of democracy. It is just as difficult for us to obtain the liberty of the poet Armando Valladares from Castro's jails as it is to find out what the Argentine military did with the journalist Edgardo Sajon, who disappeared after he was arrested by Gen. Ramon Camps on April 1, 1977, in the city of San Isidro, near Buenos Aires.

Nevertheless, the democratic left would oppose an invasion of Cuba by the United States or an invasion of Argentina, even though both were intended to impose democracy on those countries. The left has its parameters; the right would accept an invasion of Cuba.

The democratic left made up its mind about Communism long before the declaration of martial law in Poland. So much for definitions, for semantics.

As for the future, I disagree with Sontag. I believe that the struggle in Poland will continue, as it continues in Russia; intensely in Russia thanks more to the democratic dissidents who have stayed than to those who have emigrated to the West and dedicated themselves to anti-Communist causes rather than to the cause of democracy. For democracy, for humanism, there is no final defeat; there is only a final victory. In the struggle for these values, defeats are only partial, and the members of Solidarity know this.

The right's embrace of the cause of Solidarity does not worry me either. Anybody knows that the right, from Reagan to Podhoretz, is more comfortable with Jaruzelski than it would be with a democratic Poland, united with the European nuclear disarmament movement and expressing solidarity with the Salvadoran people's struggle. The protests by the right on behalf of Lech Walesa produce in me no anguish, no doubts, no surprise, no rage, no discomfort.

When Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Patricia Derian came to Buenos Aires in early August 1977, her violent exchange in Government House with the Argentine dictator Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla resulted in my being freed from a clandestine military jail (more a black hole than a jail), and brought about my reappearance in the land of the living. When Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, was in Santiago, Chile, in 1981, the venerable chairman of the Human Rights Commission, the Christian-Democratic lawyer Jaime Castillo, asked for a meeting with her and was denied it. Until that moment, Castillo had not been especially persecuted by the Chilean government. But after Kirkpatrick's departure, Castillo was expelled from Chile, and has lived as an expatriate ever since. And today all four of us—Derian, Timerman, Kirkpatrick, Castillo—support Solidarity. We do not expect any expression of anguish or guilt from Kirkpatrick about Jaime Castillo's having been exiled from Chile because he sought a meeting with her.

There is no symmetry in the world of politics. It's true that if one wished to elaborate a symmetry, one could do so. But it would be merely a tactical symmetry; it would correspond with a particular circumstantial moment of history, but not with History. Any one of the great crimes committed by the right in this century far outweighs the total of the mistakes committed by the democratic left.

Sontag's cry of anguish does not represent a new political insight into the significance and the contradictions and the dangers of Communism. Those were apparent long ago. Thirty years ago the Yugoslavs risked a Russian invasion in order to clarify some of these matters. Sontag's speech was an outcry at the accumulation of horrors that is continually coming down upon us. Her anguish over the fact that anti-Semitism has returned as an instrument of political power in Poland, with the memory of the Holocaust still so vivid, was genuine and moving. And the Jews Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol will thank her for it—not that I believe Sontag is particularly interested in the gratitude of these two particular Jews. Nevertheless, no Jew has as yet disappeared in Poland, while, according to *The Boston Globe* of November 29, all seven Jews who worked for the Argentine National Atomic Energy Commission were arrested by the military and have disappeared—surely forever. But Podhoretz and Kristol feel no obligation to worry about the anti-Semitism of the Argentine fascists.

Despite all this, I insist once again: the world is not symmetrical, and I will not alienate myself from the world because it becomes difficult to tolerate assymmetry. Despite the difference that exists between one horror and another—slavery in Saudi Arabia and martial law in Poland, etc., etc.—I set no priorities; one has to join all the battles. Despite certain terrible similarities, every horror defines itself: Communism is Communism; fascism is fascism.

Although Reagan and Kirkpatrick "weep" for the democracy Poland has lost, they will soon abandon the leaders of Solidarity for pragmatic reasons, while the democratic left continues to fight battle after battle, withstanding defeat after defeat, until the final victory is won in Poland. And nobody doubts that Sontag will be with us in the cause of freedom in El Salvador, Argentina, Nicaragua, Poland, Russia, the Middle East. The moral relationship of Sontag with reality is as much in force now as before. The democratic left may permit itself these debates. They form part of its strength and its vocation.

JACOBO TIMERMAN

Jacobo Timerman, formerly a journalist in Argentina, is the author of Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number *(Alfred A. Knopf). He is now working on another book at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey. This article was translated from the Spanish by David Fishlow, executive director of The Nation Institute.*

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CALVIN TRILLIN

I saw one of those commercials with Brooke Shields telling kids that smoking cigarettes is not cool. She was in her jeans. She said that she met this guy at a party and she thought he might be O.K., but then he pulled out a cigarette. Yuck! She knows that being around her makes some guys nervous, Brooke said, but before this guy pulled out a cigarette she had sort of thought that he had his act together better than that. She sounded very disappointed. Think how disappointed the guy must feel! This guy had a chance with Brooke Shields, and he blew it. Now she thinks the guy's a creep. I felt a little sorry for the guy, but I thought it was a pretty good commercial. I suppose I might consider giving up smoking myself rather than have Brooke Shields think I'm a creep. For the first time, I was sort of sorry that I already gave up smoking, in 1959.

A couple of days later, I saw a commercial with a famous professional basketball player telling kids that it isn't cool to smoke marijuana. I don't remember which famous professional basketball player it was: I wasn't concentrating very well because I was irritated at having the cartoons interrupted. Even without concentrating very well, I was able to get the impression from the famous professional basketball player that if you smoke a lot of marijuana you won't be able to sink a layup. I liked that commercial too. It's true that I don't smoke marijuana and I still can't sink a layup, but the reason for that, I finally decided several years ago, is that I must have a deeply repressed clubfoot.

About the time I saw the commercial with the famous basketball player, I read that Edward I. Koch, the Municipal Yenta, has devised another strategy for dealing with spray-paint graffiti in the subways. The Mayor is dropping his get-tough policy in favor of a campaign to have celebrities persuade teen-agers that painting graffiti in the subways is not cool. I suppose there will be subway ads, like the ads that feature celebrities urging us to blow the rent money on Offtrack Betting. I don't know what the Mayor plans to do about the problem of having the anti-graffiti ads covered with graffiti, but I like the idea anyway. I only hope that the abandonment of the get-tough policy on graffiti painters doesn't mean that the Mayor is dropping my suggestion that any academic or literary hustler caught writing that graffiti is a fascinating expression of artistic and cultural creativity be sprayed magenta and left without grants for a year, sentences to be served consecutively.

My only quibble with the trend toward what is now being called "moral suasion" is that I don't think teen-agers are the only people who could do with a bit of suasing. Why aren't there any moral suasion commercials, for instance, that feature celebrities telling middle-aged people that snorting cocaine is not cool? The sort of commercial I have in mind would consist of a conversation between Paul Newman and Robert Redford. They would be in their jeans. Not designer jeans. Jeans.

"Melvin Schmeckle offered me some coke on the set today," Bob would say.

Paul wouldn't say anything for a while. Then he'd say, "It figures." Then he wouldn't say anything for a while.

Then Bob would say, "It just confirms what I've always said about who snorts cocaine: the sort of Hollywood screen writer who wears his shirt unbuttoned and couldn't get dates in high school."

Paul nods, and gives his knowing smile. Paul has a very knowing smile. He nods for a long time, and keeps smiling his knowing smile. This is a long commercial. Then he says, "The wonks begin at Rodeo Drive."

Bob nods himself. Then he says, "C.P.A.s who walk like a duck." Bob does a little imitation of a guy snorting cocaine while walking like a duck.

Paul starts to laugh, and says, "Orthodontists with gold chains."

"Pear-shaped guys wearing designer jeans and pinky rings," Bob says.

Paul tries to reply, but he's laughing too hard. As the camera fades out, Bob continues to list the sort of middle-aged people who snort cocaine, while Paul, convulsed with laughter, holds up his hand in a request for mercy.

"The guy who was the corresponding secretary of the stamp club," Bob says. "Stockbrokers who take disco lessons . . . hip estate-planners . . ."

I hadn't thought about the possibility of using moral suasion commercials as an instrument of foreign policy until I saw a television interview with the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. He said that when it comes to human rights problems in friendly countries, we ought to use quiet persuasion instead of getting all het up, the way the Carter people did. From what he said, I guess there are American ambassadors all over South America telling the general in charge things like, "You know, we'd sure think a lot higher of you, general, if you'd quit making so many folks disappear." The trouble is that the ambassadors aren't celebrities. What sort of moral suasion can you expect to get out of someone who only last year was probably a car dealer in Southern California?

I figure what the State Department needs is a series of commercials with Patti LuPone, in her strapless "Evita" gown. They could run on one of those blue-movie cable channels, to reach the diplomatic crowd. "I like strong men," Patti would say. "Also strongmen." She is, of course, smiling her knowing smile. Talk about a knowing smile! I have no idea what Patti LuPone knows, but it must be even more than Paul Newman knows.

"I met a strongman I thought I was going to like," Patti says. "I liked his cars. I liked his Swiss bank account." Patti suddenly looks very serious. "Then I heard that he closes newspapers and runs torture chambers and makes people disappear," she says. She shakes her head sadly. "And to think," she says, "for a moment there, I thought he was a cool guy."

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ARTICLES.

HUNGARY'S DISSIDENTS

A Cold Wind From Poland

DOUG IRELAND

Budapest

The specter of a crackdown is haunting Hungary's dissidents. The week I arrived, Yuri Andropov, head of the Soviet Committee for State Security (K.G.B.), had just concluded an official visit. "He wasn't here only to buy shoes and salami," explained Sandov Szilagyi, founder of the Flying University, a dissident group. "We don't know what the state will do to us. Only the Hungarian political underground is not yet behind bars."

Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's coup in Poland has preoccupied the Western press, but the destruction of Solidarity has grave implications for the small dissident movements in other Eastern bloc countries. This is especially true in Hungary, which is usually portrayed as the most "liberal" and tolerant of the Warsaw Pact states. If one is to believe the recent dispatches of *The New York Times*'s R.W. Apple, Hungary is a relatively open society. The murder of Poland's freedom movement, however, has placed the democratic opposition here in serious jeopardy.

"I'm pessimistic, but I'm not sure in which direction," said Janos Kis, editor of a *samizdat* journal. When I met with Gabor Dembsky, a 30-year-old former law student and one of the leaders of the *samizdat* movement here, in a tea club for young artists, he pointed out the plainclothes secret policeman following him. Dembsky said he had been shadowed for days by a team of ten police officers on suspicion of having produced a leaflet attacking the recent Polish coup. "I may be in jail by next week," he told me. Dembsky's fate may well be a harbinger of the fate of all of Hungary's dissidents.

Last March, a secret meeting of the Hungarian Communist Party's Central Committee was held to discuss the problem of what was called the "radical opposition." The committee heard a report estimating that there were fifty hard-core dissidents in Hungary, along with 200 active sympathizers and 2,000 fellow travelers. Most dissidents believe that these numbers are low, and that there are perhaps two or three times as many people in each category. But even if one accepts the higher figures, the dissident movement in Hungary is a tiny one.

Still, even this small movement frightens the supposedly liberal regime of Janos Kadar, the dictator installed by Nikita Khrushchev at Marshal Tito's insistence after Russian forces had crushed the "little October" rebellion against Soviet rule in 1956. Last October 19, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ill-fated uprising, some sixty people gathered in a Budapest apartment to hold a memorial service for the victims of the Soviet invasion. Since even in the underground there are limits on how far one can go in attacking the regime, the meeting's program consisted solely of tape recordings of broadcasts made over Hungarian radio during the rebellion. The broadcasts included speeches by Kadar in which he attacked police-state rule and promised to share power with the newly formed workers' councils (which he crushed after he became Premier).

The next day, twenty of those who attended the meeting were detained for questioning by the police. For many, this brief detention—chilling enough in itself—had serious consequences. One university student was pulled out of her class, and when she returned the next day, she was informed that because of her absence (the only one on her record), she had failed the year's work and must do it over if she wished to graduate. Another student, taking his final examination after five years of study, was arrested just ten minutes before the period ended. Upon his release he was notified by the university that his diploma would not be granted because he had failed the examination. Without a diploma, he cannot practice his intended profession.

The memorial meeting was organized by the Flying University, which was named after an underground group formed in Warsaw's Jewish ghetto during World War II. Szilagyi, its 28-year-old leader, is an intense, Gandhi-like figure. Although he has graduate degrees in history and literature, he cleans offices for a living. "I didn't even look for work in my field after university," Szilagyi said. "I didn't want to compromise myself. Some people would consider the work I do for a living very dirty. On the contrary: it is very *clean* work." The Flying University's Monday night lecture series focuses on the subjects about which it is most difficult to find accurate information in Hungary: history, sociology and the politics of culture.

Articles on these subjects appear frequently in the burgeoning *samizdat* literature. Translations from the books of Western scholars like Christopher Jencks and Herbert Gintis are available in the *samizdat* "boutique" that operates out of the modest Budapest apartment of Laszlo Rajk, a 32-year-old architect who is something of a hero to the younger members of the intelligentsia and who bears a famous name. His father, a veteran of the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, led Hungary's underground Communist Party during World War II and was Minister of the Interior and Foreign Minister in the postwar government. As leader of the "national Communists" (as distinguished from the Stalinists, many of

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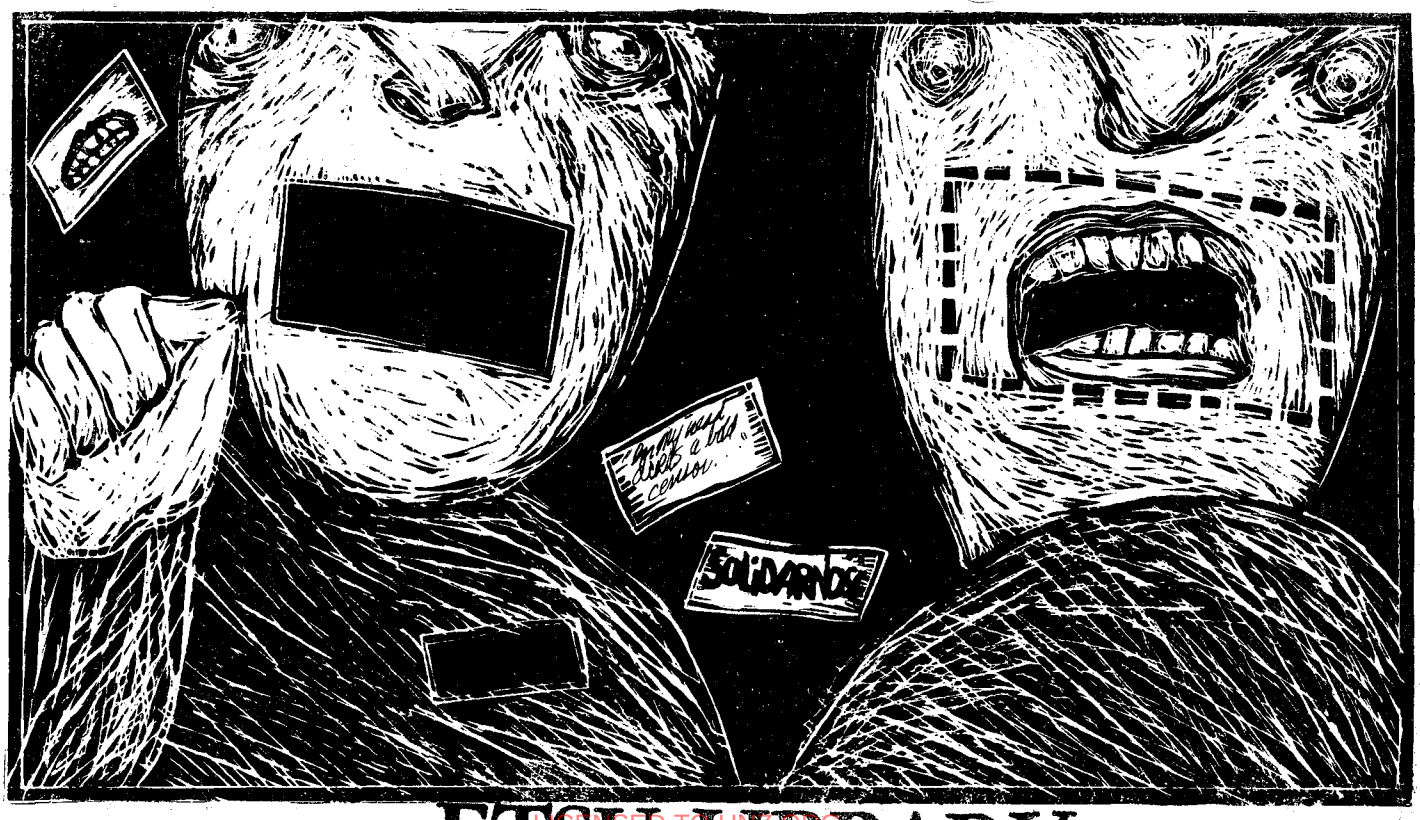
whom spent the war years in safety in Moscow), he opposed the establishment of the Hungarian secret police, and was hanged, on Stalin's orders, in 1949. The 1956 rebellion was preceded by a national work stoppage on October 6, the anniversary of his execution, and most historical accounts agree that the only reason the rebellion did not break out on that day was that it was raining.

Although he is periodically detained for questioning, the younger Rajk has so far not been imprisoned. The Hungarian government, which is trying to promote trade with the West, is understandably reluctant to move against so prominent a figure. Since he opened his bookshop ten months ago, more than 80,000 pages of *samizdat* literature have been sold at one forint—about 3 cents—a page (just enough to cover the cost of the paper, which is scarce in Hungary). An imposingly tall man with a magnetic personality and a lively wit, Rajk is under constant surveillance. Police officers sit in a van parked outside his house taking note of all visitors, and his telephone is tapped. How many people in Budapest know about the "boutique"? "Ten thousand," Rajk guessed. How many have actually come? "Perhaps 200."

The threat of a fallout of repression from Poland has not dampened the spirit of the Hungarian dissidents. Indeed, four new *samizdat* journals have appeared since the December 13 declaration of martial law. Perhaps the most important of these is *Beszelo* (Talking), edited by the wiry, bearded Janos Kis and his friend György Bence, who are the Hungarian counterparts of Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron, leaders of KOR, the Polish dissident group that served as the ideological wellspring of Solidarity. Kis and Bence, considered among the most brilliant members of the "kindergarten of Lukacs," as the generation of dissident Hungarian intellectuals now in their 40s are known, introduced the writings of the Czechoslovak human rights group Charter 77 and KOR into Hungary. Both Kis and Bence lost their academic posts in 1973 when they disseminated a *samizdat* manuscript entitled "The Road of the Intelligentsia to Class Power," a devastating critique of Kadarism that was widely circulated in the West. They now earn their living as translators, often working under the names of others.

Without exception, the dissidents I spoke to considered the Reagan Administration's policy toward Poland to be weak and vacillating—mere public relations posturing. "We in opposition in the East depend too much on America," said Rajk. Virtually all of them supported the imposition of strong across-the-board economic sanctions against the Soviet Union and Poland (with the exception of shipments of food and grain) until Solidarity's hard-won freedom is restored. "The Russians don't believe the Americans are really serious," said Kis, who admits that such sanctions could produce a crackdown in Hungary once the Soviet Union starts to export its growing economic misery to the Communist bloc countries. Although food is plentiful in Hungary (agriculture is largely in private hands), galloping inflation is destroying the workers' purchasing power, and the bureaucratized state-run industries produce shoddy goods. Housing is scarce, and there is very little new construction. Kadar, now 70, won't live forever, but the gray mediocrities with whom he surrounds himself are not likely to improve matters.

The dissidents frankly admit that, unlike the members of Poland's KOR, they have little contact with the working class, which in Hungary has a history of conservatism and, on occasion, fascism. This will make a crackdown all the more difficult to resist, particularly if it comes clothed in



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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reactionary nationalism. Hungarian intellectuals are divided between the nationalistic "agrarian populists," who bear a taint of anti-Semitism, and the "urbanists," a more liberal and cosmopolitan group. At a Hungarian writers congress at the end of last year, the former seemed to be in the ascendant.

As Hungary's small but courageous opposition faces the future, the atmosphere in which it operates is reflected in the lyrics of a song by one of the country's new wave underground rock groups, Europa Kiado: "In my head dwells a bold censor . . . Each day, all the faces show a different fear." □

HISTORY AS REDEMPTION

Henry Adams and The Education Of America

WILLIAM APPLEMAN WILLIAMS

The recent outpouring of books and other commentaries on Henry Adams makes it difficult to duck off into the hollow of a sand dune and be nurtured by his *Education*. His voice gets lost in the winds whipped up by his friends and his critics.

I think we may find more wisdom in the comments of the young people, who take him seriously. Very few people now alive, including Ph.D.s in American History, have read all nine volumes of Adams's *History of the United States During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison* (let alone his supplementary essays), but a sizable number of undergraduates have read excerpts from—or all of—*The Education of Henry Adams*. Henry would revel in that paradox. Hence I am sure he would be happy to know that most freshmen and sophomores understand very quickly that *The Education* is *not* an autobiography.

Many of those students have raised their hands in my classes and engaged in this kind of dialogue. (The quotes are real.)

Student: "I really like this book. He is telling us how we got into the mess we're in. But it sure isn't autobiography."

Me: "How's that?"

Another student: "Well, where is his family?"

A woman: "Right, how about the wife and kids?"

From the back row: "He ain't talkin'. I figure that cat had a way with the women." (General laughter.)

First student: "You're all missing the point. This just isn't an autobiography. I don't know what the hell it is, but it tells me more than the textbook."

Ah, so.

We need not explore Adams's way with the ladies to agree that he had mastered the art of seduction. He leads us to believe that he is offering a charmingly eccentric and quaint autobiography only to give us a remorseless commentary on the state of our culture. Not simply a report on the State of the Nation—but on the nature of the culture.

Consider his incessant talk about failure. At the outset, the reader (sophomore or sophisticate) is induced to feel sympathy for this man from a famous family who never became the Walter Lippmann or James Reston of his time, and who was never summoned to the White House or the State Department at odd hours to provide profound advice. But gradually we begin to understand, as the goose bumps rise, that Adams is talking about *his* failure only as a fundamental part of *our* collective failure.

Hence, I suggest that we must read *The Education* as at once a majestic summary of, and the grand culmination of, the *History*. The *History* comes to its magnificent climax in the final chapter, "American Character." Many years earlier, in volume four of the *History*, Adams had raised various issues that concerned him throughout that study and indeed his life. They were:

First. Continental empire is an inherently contradictory proposition within the assumptions and the logic of a democratic system, and it is pragmatically unstable without the threat or the exercise of economic and political force. A continent is by definition a collection of regions. And Adams knew that his beloved Northeast still hankered after "creating a new Union." Or, to put it bluntly, secession was not the uniquely evil thought of the South.

Second. The idea of "peaceable coercion" to establish and secure an American pre-eminence in the Western Hemisphere was inherent in the culture of the North as well as of the South. Americans always justified war "to abolish war, with its train of debt, extravagance, corruption, and tyranny." American power was by definition exercised for the good of all.

Third. Once the North had defeated the South, it was essential "in every point of view" for the new Union to win "the friendship of Russia."

By the time we reach volume nine, however, Russia has been put on the back burner. Other issues have been brought to a boil. Indeed, *the* issue has been defined: "*What object, besides physical content, must a democratic continent aspire to attain?*" (Emphasis added.) Notice that crucial distinction between *should* and *must*. It is not incidental.

Adams returns to that challenge in *The Education* after telling us a few delightful tales about his boyhood in a famous and once powerful family. My favorite story is about his grandfather, President John Quincy Adams, taking the recalcitrant Henry by the hand and silently walking him to school. We learn a good bit about the austere, but nevertheless subtle and knowing, humanity of John Quincy Adams. But we also begin to see, as Henry Adams intended,

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why our culture has not won the hearts and minds of most other peoples.

Either help people or do not help people, but for God's sake do not lecture them. Do not prate on about your own virtues—or what you assume to be your own virtues. Just do the job and get on down the line. If helping people is part of being an American, then help people. Let it go at that. After all, being an American ought to be enough in and of itself.

In such sly ways does Adams tell us that *The Education* is the tenth volume of the *History*. He drives the point home with one devastating remark: "From cradle to grave this problem of running order through chaos, direction through space, discipline through freedom, unity through multiplicity, has always been, and must always be, the task of education, as it is the moral of religion, philosophy, science, art, politics, and economy." Either a culture does that work or it does not.

And so, picking up the story where the *History* leaves off, after the Madison Administration, Adams offers us a number of sharply disturbing evaluations. Consider, for example, his comment on the character of public education: "It is a sort of dynamo machine for polarizing the popular mind; for turning and holding its lines of force in the direction supposed to be most effective for State purposes." Anyone who knows anything about American schools can appreciate that marvelous summary of reality.

Then he takes us into the inner circles of Washington, D.C., during the months between the election and the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. He writes: "The government had an air of social instability and incompleteness that went far to support the right of secession in theory as in fact; but right or wrong, secession was likely to be easy where there was so little to secede from. The Union was sentiment, but not much more."

At that point comes a marvelous bit of oral history. Adams was a master of that idiom, which some moderns think they invented. His father, Charles Francis Adams, and William Seward, who was to be Lincoln's Secretary of State, were trying to save the newly born Republican Party while Lincoln sat silent in Illinois. Henry has dinner with his father and Seward. There is much talk, culminating in this comment by Seward to Charles Francis: "If there's no secession now, you and I are ruined." Those ten words force all serious historians to re-evaluate the coming of the Civil War. Consider only the most obvious question: What would the Republicans have done without secession? (We moderns have our own version of that situation. What would we do without the Russians, or the Cubans, or countless others?) A cornerstone for revisionism laid down as a casual anecdote. Henry Adams *was* a master historian.

That is superb autobiography. But thereafter, Adams abandons almost all pretense of autobiography. He offers some highly personal history (including some marvelously revealing vignettes), but he is talking to us about our common effort to learn something from what he laconically calls "an education that had cost a civil war." Adams understandably thought that an education purchased at that price ought to lead to something meaningful—for the dead, the survivors and subsequent generations. It is a fair proposition. And so, if we keep in mind that Adams was writing the *History* during those years after 1865, and doing so with that issue in the forefront of his mind, then we gain an appreciation of why *The Education* is the last volume of that vast enterprise.

Comfortably ensconced among the knowledgeable elite in Washington, looking backward and peering forward, Adams first posed the central questions. The Civil War was done and done. Call it inevitable and just (even as you raise a naughty question about the Union's legitimacy) and leave it at that. But there were a million dead and maimed who must be honored. We need an education to redeem them. Adams was an old-fashioned historian who felt the weight of that kind of responsibility. And so the more one studied history, the more one discovered that it was impossible to avoid the disturbing questions. He put them bluntly in the *History*.

There was first the danger of success: "One uniform and harmonious system appealed to the imagination as a triumph of human progress, offering prospects of peace and ease, contentment and philanthropy, such as the world had not seen; but it invited dangers, formidable because unusual or altogether unknown. The corruption of such a system might prove to be proportionate with its dimensions, and uniformity might lead to evils as serious as were commonly ascribed to diversity." And then there was the challenge of success. Having achieved "uniformity," America would reach the heart of the matter: "*What object, besides physical content, must a democratic continent aspire to attain?*"

Answering that question was, after all, the purpose of an

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WRITERS CONGRESS RECORD

Milwaukee Writers Project

"I am founder and project coordinator of a Wisconsin literary organization called the Milwaukee Writers Project, which will soon be established as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization to help writers.

"As a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, the Milwaukee Writers Project will pool seed money from a consortium of foundations, corporations, government agencies and individual patrons. In turn, it will hire the most talented (or most promising) poets, novelists, historians, playwrights and other writers in Wisconsin—actually put them on a payroll—to work on their own projects. In return for this guaranteed income (plus other benefits, including office space and health insurance), the writers will be required to pay to the project a portion of any writing-related earnings. They would keep a part as an inducement to produce more.

"Overall, the plan provides a new kind of advance against future earnings—to assure writers a basic living wage so that they can work virtually full time on their craft. As staff writers earn income from the sale of their work, the percentage paid back to the organization will go into an endowment. Interest from this fund will be used to hire other writers, and the ever-growing endowment will gradually replace outside funding to the organization, until it becomes totally self-sufficient.

"The Milwaukee Writers Project will hire thirteen writers, paying them salaries ranging from $10,000 to $26,000. According to a recent study by the Authors League, the median income for writers in the United States is just $4,775. However, this increases to $8,000 for those who work full time at their craft. On this basis, Milwaukee Writers Project authors would be projected to earn $104,000 a year from the sale of their work. Under the organization's rather complicated payback schedule, $72,800 of those earnings would go to the organization's endowment fund. At current interest rates of 16.5 percent, that would produce $12,012 —enough to hire another staff writer.

"The 'Milwaukee Model,' as we've called it, will be administered on a statewide basis. It will operate privately, not as a government agency. And its dependence on Federal funding will be relatively small. Our organization promotes writers as community and regional assets, much as a symphony society, for example, supports a local orchestra. Our position is that writers are vital to a community's cultural bloodstream, and that it is to a community's benefit to insure that some authors are financially able to pursue their calling."

—Jonathan Fisher, senior editor,
National Wildlife magazine,
American Writers Congress, October 9-12, 1981.

education that would redeem the 1 million dead and maimed. And so Adams had no choice but to write *The Education*. It was the final volume of the *History*. It was also his final report on the discrepancy between the creation and exercise of enormous power and the failure to define a purpose for such power.

In one sense, as many commentators have noted, *The Education* is a tale of failure. We have never redeemed those 1 million. Henry Adams knew that. Just as you and I know that. And I think it is clear that Adams neither individually nor in association with his chosen friends imagined or defined the appropriate new order that would redeem them. But he tried. As he now and again admitted, the only real alternative was to create a socialist republic. But he recognized that socialism was being destroyed by the rampant American bourgeoisie. Greed destroyed community. Henry lacked both the mind and the will to lead the effort to create a truly democratic socialist republic. The only Adams who might have given it a serious try was John Quincy, the man who quietly took Henry Adams to school. But John Quincy Adams was long dead.

But that is not what the critics mean when they talk about Henry's failure—or his playing at failure. Hence the critics are ultimately wrong. Adams was not a failure except as American culture was a failure. We did not do what he did not do. None of us have yet used the deaths of the Civil War to create a new America. Adams knew that, told us that, and therein lies the greatness of *The Education*.

The destruction of one instrument of government through a Civil War demands the creation of a new social compact—or contract. There is no credible evidence that even Lincoln understood that truth. By his own admission, Lincoln had set out to transcend the Founding Fathers, and yet he issued no call for a second Constitutional convention. Indeed, in his last speeches, he seemed almost paralyzed by the moral and pragmatic havoc he had wrought. William Lee Miller has made us forever aware of that trauma in an article entitled "Lincoln's Second Inaugural: The Zenith of Statecraft," published in *The Center Magazine* (July/August, 1980).

John Quincy Adams had seen the truth; he had called for secession by the North and the writing of a new Constitution. And Henry Adams was just enough of John Quincy's grandson to speak to that truth. Henry put it this way: "The system of 1789 had broken down, and with it the eighteenth-century fabric of *a priori*, or moral principles." The choice was clear: "Either some new standard must be created" or "nine-tenths of men's political energies must henceforth be wasted on expedients to piece out—to patch—or, in vulgar language, to tinker—the political machine as often as it broke down."

Unhappily, Henry was correct. We Americans have not undertaken to create "new morals and new machinery." We have not taken the "time for thought." We are "wandering in a wilderness." We have "become an economic-thinking machine which [works] only on a fixed line," an automated chain saw moving through one national resource after another.

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Given that ruthless analysis (shall we call it social autobiography?), and having turned away from democratic socialism, Adams understandably flirted with imperialism. His affair with empire was a typically American act of desperation. If one says no to saying no, then one must perforce try saying yes to everything. But that, of course, leads to nonsense, as Adams realized after Theodore Roosevelt became President. He was frightened. "The effect of unlimited power on limited mind is worth noting," he wrote of Roosevelt, "because it must represent the same process in society." Oh, my. How perceptive. The fear was excruciatingly rational: "The power of self-control must have limit somewhere in face of the control of the infinite."

I make no claim that Henry Adams literally anticipated nuclear weapons. But he did, *unquestionably*, warn us of the need to control the power we have generated. We still have to redeem those million casualties. But we seem unable to say no to what we all know is both wrong and suicidal.

So we come to the end of the *History* and *The Education*. Consider that marvelous passage about learning the hard way: "Bombs educate vigorously, and even wireless telegraphy or airships might require the reconstruction of society." Indeed. Fully aware that we had not seized the moment at the end of the Civil War, Adams nevertheless continued his efforts to educate us to create a new standard that would honor those 1 million Americans killed and wounded by Americans.

True enough, he failed. But he was never so egocentric as to personalize our cultural failure. His ostensible autobiography remains the last word about our history. We have yet to imagine, let alone create, what he called "a world that sensitive and timid natures could regard without a shudder." □

PALESTINIAN SCHISM

The Two Faces Of the P.L.O.

ROBERT FRIEDMAN

There has been a surge of activity in Washington recently to get the stalled West Bank autonomy talks moving again despite continuing pessimism about Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's obdurate hard line. Secretary of State Alexander Haig journeyed to the Middle East in January, and earlier this month an effusive welcome was extended to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Washington. Mubarak emphasized that any autonomy agreement "must be acceptable to the Palestinians."

No reference was made to the offstage actor in the drama—the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is unquestionably the voice of the Palestinian people. Over the past year, there have been several internal upheavals in this often fractious coalition that will affect its attitude toward any new peace efforts in the Middle East. A close look at some of these recent convulsions is in order.

Our account begins with the man who masterminded the notorious massacre of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics by terrorists belonging to the Black September movement. He is often to be seen nowadays visiting a drab, three-story brick orphanage located in a quiet residential quarter of war-torn West Beirut, Lebanon. He supports this haven with the royalties from a book he wrote called *A Palestinian Without a Country*.

It is doubtful that any of the 150 children at the orphanage have read it. Survivors of the 1976 Christian Phalangist assault on the Tel Zatar refugee camp for Palestinians in East Beirut, they can only understand Arabic, and the book has not been translated into that language, although it caused a stir in France, where it was first published, and later in Israel and the United States. Its author, who calls himself Abu Iyad, is the head of international operations for the P.L.O., and in his book he proposed a West Bank state for the Palestinians, which would coexist peacefully with Israel, as the ultimate resolution of the Palestinian question.

But when I interviewed Abu Iyad, whose real name is Salah Khalaf, at his heavily guarded Beirut office in November 1980, he told me that his views had changed. Peace with Israel is impossible, he said. He once wrote that "[Palestinian] terrorism will stop when we have a state to run," but in Beirut he said: "We will not lay down our weapons until we have a state that fulfills the ultimate goal of the Palestinian movement—a nonsectarian, democratic state in the whole of Palestine, comprising Moslems, Christians and Jews."

Abu Iyad's repudiation of his earlier call for peace, and his increasing popularity and strength in the P.L.O., have encouraged the hard-liners within the organization who demand the destruction of the Jewish state. As a result, a growing internal power struggle threatens to tear the P.L.O. apart.

According to diplomatic sources in Beirut, Abu Iyad was unhappy about P.L.O. chief Yasir Arafat's public espousal of a more conciliatory approach to Israel during his diplomatic initiative begun in early 1980 to win the support of European governments. Allegedly using funds provided by Libya's Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, Abu Iyad created a secret group to oppose Arafat's policies. Since the group was formed, Abu Iyad's gunmen have clashed with followers of his chief rival within the P.L.O., Abu Jihad, head of military operations on the West Bank and in Israel, who is an ally of Arafat.

Under Abu Iyad's leadership, rejectionist Palestinians have gained considerable ground in the P.L.O. Meeting in Damascus, Syria, in June 1980, the ruling congress of Al Fatah, the P.L.O.'s largest commando group, passed a resolution pledging "to liquidate the Zionist entity politically, economically, militarily, culturally and ideologically."

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This language is far harsher than that in the P.L.O.'s most recent statement on the subject, which called for a Palestinian state "on any Palestinian land liberated [from Israel]." Actually, Al Fatah's resolution harks back to the P.L.O.'s 1964 Cairo charter, which also called for the destruction of the "Zionist entity" in Palestine.

Thus, the Damascus congress delivered a blow to Arafat's search for international respectability, which calls for cleaning up the P.L.O.'s image. Seeking to downplay the Fatah resolution, Arafat told *The International Herald Tribune* in July 1980 that it was only a "suggestion" which had not been formally adopted by the congress.

Many Palestinian leaders disagree, however. Both May Sayegh, head of the Palestinian Women's Union, and Maged Abu Sharar, head of the P.L.O.'s Unified Information Department (who was killed in Rome last October when a bomb exploded in his hotel room), characterized the resolution as a binding document that expresses the will of the Palestinian people. Abu Iyad told me that the resolution's meaning had been distorted by Zionist propagandists. "It called for the destruction of the Zionist entity and not Israel," he said. "There is a difference. Although the resolution really didn't say anything new, the Zionists put Arafat in the position of having to denounce it." But the damage had been done. The United States and several European countries condemned the P.L.O., and the Begin government won a rare propaganda victory.

Abu Iyad and Yasir Arafat were not always rivals. Abu Iyad met Arafat and Abu Jihad in the early 1950s when he was a student at Cairo University, then a hotbed of student activism and political intrigue. In addition to their studies and activities on behalf of the Palestinian cause, the three were members of the fanatical, right-wing Moslem Brotherhood. In the spring of 1956, Arafat was elected chairman of the Palestinian student union at Cairo University. That same year, he and Abu Iyad represented the organization at an international student conference in Prague. Several months after the conference, Arafat, Abu Iyad and Abu Jihad were arrested by Egyptian police and charged with plotting to overthrow President Gamal Abdul Nasser. After spending some time in jail they were banished to Kuwait, where they founded Al Fatah.

According to Hirsh Goodman, military affairs correspondent for the *Jerusalem Post*, Abu Iyad spent most of the 1960s in Damascus, where he developed overseas contacts for Al Fatah and organized its international terrorist operations. In 1969—the year Arafat became chairman of the executive committee of the P.L.O., succeeding Ahmed Shukairy—Abu Iyad was made head of Al Fatah's military and intelligence networks, the second most powerful job in the commando group.

His first reported break with Arafat occurred in 1971. In the wake of the P.L.O.'s failure to overthrow Jordan's King Hussein in the Black September uprising of 1970, Abu Iyad charged that Arafat was responsible for the breakdown in discipline that led to the rout of the Palestinians by the King's better-armed Bedouin troops. Abu Iyad also opposed Arafat's efforts to bring in Saudi Arabia to mediate the dispute between the P.L.O. and Jordan because he feared that the conservative monarchy would gain undue influence over the weakened, financially depleted Palestinian national movement. (Like the theorists in the half-dozen or so Marxist groups that belong to the P.L.O., Abu Iyad believes that the conservative Arab regimes must be overthrown, after which all Arabs will unite to create a just society and to liberate Palestine. Arafat, on the other hand, has no ideological goals beyond the liberation of Palestine. He tries to avoid involvement in inter-Arab affairs.)

After the debacle, the remnants of the Palestinian resistance movement straggled into Lebanon. To force the Palestinian question to the forefront of world affairs and to further enhance his power, Abu Iyad organized Black September, which was responsible for, among other things, a spate of attacks on Israeli, European, U.S. and Saudi Arabian embassies and diplomats and, of course, the murder of eleven members of the Israeli Olympic team.

In 1971, at the eighth Al Fatah congress in Cairo, Abu Iyad was almost elected chairman in place of Arafat. Because of his appeal to the group's younger, more radical members, Abu Iyad actually received more votes than Arafat did, but by dint of clever political maneuvering, Arafat was able to hold on to his job.

But the Marxist groups within the P.L.O. were themselves torn by internal quarrels. In 1972, according to a former member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's central committee, disillusioned members of these radical groups started joining Al Fatah because of its broader appeal to the Palestinian masses, which the Marxists hoped to exploit. Today, he said, the ideological tension within the P.L.O. is no longer between Al Fatah and the Marxist parties but inside Al Fatah itself, which has lurched leftward with the infusion of so many uncompromising militants. He added that Arafat remains in power because he is the only figure with credibility among both the masses and other Arab leaders. But he faces a growing challenge.

The quarrel between Arafat and Abu Iyad erupted again in June 1980 at the ninth Al Fatah congress in Damascus, Syria. According to a member of the P.L.O.'s central committee in Beirut, Arafat favored a moratorium on Al Fatah terrorism outside of Israel in order to win Western support, while Abu Iyad wanted the terrorism campaign to continue. To further his diplomatic offensive, Arafat sent messages to key Western journalists and politicians (e.g., Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times* and Representative Paul Findley, Republican of Illinois, the ranking minority member of the subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East) saying that the P.L.O. would be satisfied with a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

When he is speaking for home consumption, however, Arafat takes a somewhat different line. An editor of the influential Beirut daily *As Safir*, which has strong ties to the P.L.O., said that at a meeting of the paper's editorial board shortly after the Damascus conference, Arafat explained

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why he was calling for the peaceful establishment of a West Bank state. If the world recognized the Palestinians' right to return to East Jerusalem, he told the editors, then it would eventually recognize their right to West Jerusalem. If the world recognized the Palestinians' right to Hebron, then why not later to Haifa? In other words, it can be argued that Palestinian statehood is a tactic—a Trojan horse that would enable the P.L.O. to get peacefully what it is now unable to take by force.

Well-placed Palestinian sources privately agree that the proposed West Bank state is both a ploy and a publicity gimmick to attract Western support. "We send a red shirt to Russia and a blue shirt to the United States," said a former member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's central committee, "but our goal as expressed in Damascus remains consistent."

Arafat's strategy came under heavy criticism from the militant rank and file at the Damascus congress. His diplomatic initiative was perceived as a failure—a failure made all the more galling by Begin's settlement policies, the deportation of two Arab West Bank mayors and the Israeli crackdown on political activities in the occupied territories. Arafat found himself caught between the demands of the rejectionists, who had listened to twenty years of his militant rhetoric, and the need to court diplomatic recognition by the international community.

The result, said Sabri Jyris, a 45-year-old Palestinian lawyer who heads the P.L.O. research center in Beirut, is that Arafat has been politically immobilized, while Abu Iyad has become, in the eyes of many Palestinians, the true champion of their cause.

Backed by anti-Arafat Syria and Libya, Abu Iyad is in an excellent position to sabotage Arafat's moderate tactics. The P.L.O. is in the dubious position of being under Syria's de facto control in Damascus, where its headquarters is located, and in Beirut, its center of operations, where Syrian peacekeeping forces are stationed. For example, when Syria boycotted the November 1980 Arab summit in Amman, Jordan, the P.L.O. had no choice but to boycott it too. President Hafaz al-Assad of Syria is the leader of the rejectionist forces in the Arab world, and Abu Iyad is Assad's man in the P.L.O., according to sources in Beirut.

In private, few P.L.O. leaders seriously consider abandoning their goal of controlling all of Palestine. A West Bank-Gaza Strip mini-state is at best a "transitional solution"—a means to an end. In fact, these leaders become annoyed whenever anyone within their ranks proposes a permanent two-state solution. They believe that conceding Israel's right to exist means giving up the legitimacy of the struggle against it. Thus, Mahmoud Labadi, the head of the P.L.O.'s foreign information department, dismissed as "academic" an analysis of how a Jewish state and a Palestinian state could coexist that was published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1978. The author, Walid Khalidi, a professor of political science at the American University in Beirut who has close ties with Israeli doves, was stripped of his P.L.O. membership for three years in the mid-1970s because of his moderate views, according to sources in Beirut. His home was confiscated by fellow Palestinians during that period.

Professor Khalidi, one of a handful of Palestinian intellectuals who advocate the two-state view, told me in his Beirut office that Begin's policies and the "farce that Camp David means self-government" have undercut the moderate forces in the Palestinian camp. "Begin's major strategic objective and his greatest foreign policy success," he said, "has been to harden Palestinian attitudes—to strengthen the rejectionists."

In the fall of 1980, I spent a month at P.L.O. headquarters in Beirut. The general mood was pessimistic. Israel's relentless attacks on Palestinian bases in Lebanon had taken a grim toll in lives and morale. Worse still, the Palestinians complained, the United States' emphasis on the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf had buried their cause in the back pages of the world's newspapers. Palestinian leaders, deeply embittered and suspicious, distrusted Ronald Reagan and believed that the Camp David process was an American plot to keep Palestinians in eternal bondage.

A visit one year later found the mood even bleaker. A plague of sensational car-bomb attacks at P.L.O. command centers in Beirut and South Lebanon, coupled with the devastating Israeli air strike on the organization's Beirut offices last July, left the leadership badly shaken. The Marxist party headquarters was especially hard hit by the Israeli war planes.

Arafat's cautious support of the eight-point peace plan proposed by Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia in August 1981, which implied recognition of Israel, has badly damaged his position in the P.L.O., according to a December 10 interview with Abu Iyad that appeared in the Kuwaiti newspaper *as-Siyassa*. At a meeting of the P.L.O.'s

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fifteen-man executive committee last November, only Arafat and one other member favored the Fahd proposal. The overwhelming majority, led by Abu Iyad, came out against it.

Syria sealed the fate of the Fahd peace plan when President Assad refused to attend the Arab League conference in Fez, Morocco, last November, where the proposal was to be debated.

A recent report in the Lebanese publication *al-Watan al-Arabi*, which cited "political analysts in Beirut and Damascus," concluded that Syria has lost patience with the independent political line pursued by Arafat in recent months and is now determined to replace him and his supporters with others more amenable to its influences—even if that means tearing the P.L.O. apart. Abu Iyad is Arafat's logical successor, analysts in Beirut say, in view of his close relationship with the current regime in Damascus.

Charges of high-level corruption have also weakened the organization's morale. Beirut, which resembles Chicago in the 1920s when Prohibition mobs ruled the streets, is a paradise for commando war lords who have a taste for crime [see Milton Viorst, "Israel's Game Plan in Lebanon," *The Nation*, October 10, 1981]. While teen-age thugs from the city's thirty-five or so paramilitary groups stalk the streets, many P.L.O. leaders play behind locked doors. They wear elegant evening clothes, dine in swank restaurants and travel in armed, chauffeur-driven limousines. At one lavishly catered affair I attended in a luxury residential neighborhood in predominantly Moslem West Beirut, high-ranking P.L.O. officers arrived with machine guns on one arm and airline stewardesses on the other.

Not all P.L.O. leaders are enamored of such ostentatious living, but many are. Typical of the latter was Zuheir Muhsen, former head of the Syrian-backed Palestinian commando group Al-Saiqua who was assassinated in 1979 in front of his $250,000 villa near Cannes, France. He had just returned from a night at the casino, where he had reportedly lost $25,000. After Muhsen's death, Abu Iyad, who is said to be a hard-drinking womanizer with a fat Swiss bank account, proclaimed: "The Palestinian revolution will take all roads, even if they lead through Cannes!"

Michael Hudson, a professor at Georgetown University and executive director of its Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, has observed that the P.L.O.'s greatest strength has been that its top leadership has remained intact since 1958 and that it has been "remarkably untainted by corruption, personal vanity and vindictiveness." But this no longer seems to be true. Until recently, Arafat has managed to suppress internal differences and play down corruption by concentrating on the Zionist enemy. In other words, anything was acceptable in the sacred cause of liberating Palestine. But the break between Arafat and Abu Iyad threatens to split Al Fatah, the backbone of the Palestinian national movement.

Yet beset as it is by political turmoil, the P.L.O. is still a formidable force. Because it unquestionably speaks on behalf of the Palestinian people, and thus is a principal actor in the Arab-Israeli dispute, it must be recognized. It is unfortunate that the Palestinians' cause is more worthy than their leaders, but that is no reason to ignore their legitimate grievances.

Gen. Yaacov Harkabi, the former head of Israeli military intelligence and a one-time hawk who is now a self-proclaimed "Machiavellian dove," supports Palestinian self-determination on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In an interview at his office at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, he said that a Palestinian state is inevitable under the universally recognized principle of self-determination. Therefore, he said, "Israel should begin negotiations with the P.L.O. from a position of strength." He argued that if Israel recognized the P.L.O. and the P.L.O., in turn, failed to negotiate in good faith, Israel would win a significant propaganda victory.

But a Palestinian official in Beirut told me that a relaxation of Israel's adamant opposition to the organization could have unwelcome consequences. "If Israel renounced sovereignty over the occupied territories and called for negotiations with us," he said, "there would be a terrible blood bath in Beirut. The rejectionists and pragmatists would be at each other's throats. The status quo is preferable to that. In the meantime, we will continue to explain the justice of our cause throughout the world."

In *A Palestinian Without a Country* Abu Iyad warned that the P.L.O. was in danger of disintegrating. He wrote: "I must say with profound regret that we are in a far worse situation today than the one which prompted us to establish our movement in 1958."

More recently, Abu Iyad told me, "To my great sorrow, this is still true." The personal feuds, the political instability, the confusion about tactics and goals, and the lack of a clear moderating influence within the P.L.O. will have an unsettling effect on the politics of the region for years to come. □

REED, REDS AND 'THE NATION'

"What gives the general lie to all the mess of rumor that John Reed spent most of his crowded revolutionary life in wishful regret is the fact that he could always have stepped out of the ranks. The return to a well-paid job and its brass check was easy and open. All he had to do was to write something like the many 'Confessions of an Ex-Communist' that appear nowadays in The Nation *and* New Republic, *in which contemporary authors purge the Communist movement of their unstable and treacherous persons.*

"If you will look down the dock at the current treason trials in The Nation, *you will find few who have been close enough to the American people to see life through their eyes. . . . Let the fatted calf be killed in* The Nation *office, and the joy bells ring in Wall Street when another weak and repentant sister returns with her sniveling tale of how a bewhiskered man named Marx seduced her."* —Michael Gold, *New Masses*, October 22, 1940

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THE PRESIDENT (MIS)SPEAKS

There He Goes Again: A Column

MARK GREEN

Although there have been a rash of stories recently about the President's misstatements, Ronald Reagan has a long history of inaccuracies that suspiciously and invariably favor his positions. The most recent stream of documented whoppers, bloopers and deceptions, however, now threatens to undermine his greatest political asset, what columnist George Will called "his lock on the trust of America."

There are several possible explanations for this pattern of errors, aside from memory lapses and sloppiness. First, Reagan frequently shades the truth in the service of ideology. He has several idées fixes about the way the world works, which he has been expressing for thirty years. When reality collides with ideology, his tendency is to alter the facts rather than his views.

Second, he is genuinely genial and upbeat about himself, his programs and his America. He is a President Pangloss who transforms bad news into good. He appears actually to believe, for example, that supply-side economics will work, that his staff is a "happy group" and that his welfare cuts won't hurt the poor. This is self-delusion, not optimism.

Third, he lacks sophistication about public policy. Programmatically unschooled and unwilling to put in long hours of study on complex issues, Reagan often "wings it." The result can be confusion and error.

Although none of his misrepresentations are as yet of the historical magnitude of Lyndon Johnson's on the Gulf of Tonkin or Richard Nixon's on Watergate, little acorns can grow into big oaks of disastrous policies; certainly, over a period of time, a President systematically purveying false information will erode public trust in the political process.

In the belief that, as Justice Louis Brandeis once said, "sunlight is the best of disinfectants," *The Nation* will publish an occasional column called "There He Goes Again" devoted to debunking the latest bloopers that the mainstream press has missed. This should be a collective effort, so we invite readers to send in their examples, along with evidence demonstrating how the statements are wrong or misleading. Contributors will be credited, of course. The goals of this modest effort are to at least clear the air and, on the assumption that the President is either educable or embarrassable, possibly to prod the White House to do better next time. Send your entries to Mark Green, c/o *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011. Herewith the first edition.

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Reagan: At his February 18 press conference the President said that only $592 million of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act's $3.2 billion went for actual job training. And he told Dan Rather in a television interview on January 27, "There are a number of programs going forward right now between the private sector and government aimed at providing job skills for people."

Truth: According to a high-level official in the Department of Labor, who insisted on anonymity, "The President's arithmetic was misplaced because there is $1.4 billion going to training." Added Michael Arnold, director of the Human Resources Development Institute, A.F.L.-C.I.O., "I don't know what the President means. There're certainly no new initiatives in employment training. The whole employment system is just trying to respond to the cuts they've suffered. There's nothing going forward except if it's in somebody's mind over there." James Hashian, director of public affairs at the Labor Department, said, "It's too early to tell what the President's programs will be. We're really involved in a huge experiment to see if the private sector will take on this responsibility for training."

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Reagan: "Well, I have said many times . . . that if I had to come down to a choice between rebuilding our defenses or balancing the budget, I would have to come down on the side of rebuilding our defenses." (Rather interview.)

Truth: A search of Reagan's statements did not turn up one example, much less many, of his claimed declaration. A White House press spokeswoman conducted her own inquiry and said, "I cannot pinpoint a place where he said it the way he did in the interview. I don't know if he stated it just like that during the campaign."

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Reagan: "When I was governor of California, I appointed more blacks to executive and policy-making positions than all the previous governors of California put together." (Rather interview.)

Truth: Marion Woods, head of the Social Welfare Department in California: "Reagan had five black appointments, but none were to significant policy positions. One, in fact, was a registered member of the John Birch Society. Ten or so others in 'executive' positions went around the state asking people what they thought were problems. In contrast, Gov. Jerry Brown has appointed 410 blacks to state government positions, including two agency secretaries and six agency directors."

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Reagan: "Many of the New Dealers actually espoused what today has become an epithet—fascism. . . . Ickes, [Secretary of the Interior] Harold Ickes, in his book, said that what we were striving for was a kind of modified form of Communism." (Interview with Ben Wattenberg, December 1981.)

Truth: After inquiring about the basis of the fascism charge, we were told by a White House spokeswoman, "I don't know and can't find who he was referring to specifically." Prof. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who has read the Ickes diaries word-for-word, said that there was nothing in them to substantiate the charge that Ickes was "striving for . . . a kind of modified form of Communism."

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Reagan: In his first address to the nation on economic policy, the President claimed that we were "very much worse off" today than we were in 1960, that "we have too much money chasing too few goods" and that "American business was taxed so excessively as to be priced out of the world market."

Truth: Average income in real dollars today is double what it was in 1960. With more than 20 percent of industrial capacity idle for lack of consumer demand, the United States does not have

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"demand-pull" inflation, and American exports increased by 21.4 percent in 1980 over the previous year.

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Reagan: Commenting at a press conference last October on the dispute between Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger over whether NATO policy calls for firing a nuclear "warning shot"—"So far I've had no answer to that."

Truth: Press Secretary Larry Speakes to reporters—"He knows the answer. He just doesn't want to tell you."

The C.I.A.

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

story on February 14.) Other sources in both Congress and the executive branch confirmed that Enders reported to members of the select committees, in compliance with what the Administration considers to be the requirements of the Hughes-Ryan amendment to the 1976 foreign aid act.*

The Assistant Secretary told the Congressmen that the aim of the C.I.A.'s covert action is to incite unrest in Nicaragua using former Somoza guardsmen, dissident elements and ethnic minorities in Nicaragua and exile groups in the United States. Nicaraguan officials say that the former guardsmen's attacks are intended to provoke retaliatory measures by the Nicaraguan Army, thus creating a pretext for foreign military intervention.

Veteran C.I.A. official Nestor Sanchez, who is now Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American Affairs, has been placed in charge of the clandestine operations for the Caribbean basin, according to sources in the Defense Department. Enders commands the entire Central American and Caribbean policy team.

Other covert operations are also planned against Cuba and Grenada, and against guerrilla forces in El Salvador and Guatemala. Several members of Congress "understood" from their secret briefings that U.S. personnel would not be involved in combat. A photograph of a U.S. colonel carrying an M-16 near a combat zone in El Salvador that was recently published in American newspapers appeared to contradict the Administration's guarantees to Congress. At present, fierce fighting is taking place along Nicaragua's northeastern border with Honduras, where former Somoza guardsmen have attacked Nicaraguan border patrols and local peasants. Last December, forty-five Nicaraguan soldiers were killed and hundreds more wounded in these attacks, according to the Nicaraguan government.

On January 2, the Honduran Defense Ministry charged that Nicaraguan troops had crossed the border on two occasions shortly after Christmas and killed more than 200 Nicaraguan exiles [see Elizabeth Farnsworth and Stephen Talbot, "Dispatches," *The Nation*, January 23]. The charge was called "totally false" by the Honduran Interior Minister and president of the National Commission of Refugees, Carlos Mejía Arellano. The Honduran government, which recently signed a treaty with El Salvador and Costa Rica reiterating their right "to resort to collective security measures," has refused to discuss Nicaragua's proposal for joint Honduran-Nicaraguan border patrols to prevent incursions by the exile groups.

A campaign to recruit Miskito Indians to fight against the Nicaraguan government is also being conducted by Radio 15th of September, a clandestine radio station located in Honduras. (The transcripts of several broadcasts appeared in the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Bulletin*, distributed by the U.S. Department of Commerce.) There are between 75,000 and 120,000 Miskitos in Nicaragua, making them the country's largest ethnic minority. Most of them inhabit the remote northeastern part of Nicaragua.

In late December, Steadman Fagoth Mueller, an exiled Miskito leader, was injured in the crash of a Honduran Air Force plane. (Fagoth, formerly a representative on the Council of State, the legislative body of the Nicaraguan government, was arrested on February 27, 1981, on the ground that documents recovered from Somoza police files showed him to be an undercover agent. He was released soon after and fled to Honduras.) Accompanying Fagoth were a member of the Honduran armed forces and former National Guardsmen. Fagoth made regular broadcasts on Radio 15th of September, urging Miskitos to come to Honduras and join preparations for the invasion of Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan government demanded that Honduras explain why Fagoth and the former guardsmen were aboard its military plane [see "Central America Watch," *The Nation*, January 30]. The Honduran government has not yet responded.

Some Miskitos were lured to Honduras with promises of better living conditions and cash coupled with threats that they would be murdered by Nicaraguan troops or bombed by Nicaraguan and Cuban planes. According to Nicaraguan officials, a number of Indians have been kidnapped by former Somoza guardsmen. Sources in the Catholic Church in Nicaragua say that more than 5,000 Miskitos have gone to Honduras since July 1979. The geography of Nicaragua's northeastern part makes it difficult for the government to provide security for the local residents against attacks and harassment. The Nicaraguan government claims that the subversive bands enter the country with ease and then slip

*The number of Congressmen present at the briefings is not known. The Republican members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence are Barry Goldwater (chairman), Arizona; Jake Garn, Utah; John Chafee, Rhode Island; Richard Lugar, Indiana; Malcolm Wallop, Wyoming; Dave Durenberg, Minnesota; William Roth Jr., Delaware; Harrison Schmitt, New Mexico. The Democratic members are Daniel Patrick Moynihan, New York; Walter Huddleston, Kentucky; Joseph Biden Jr., Delaware; Daniel Inouye, Hawaii; Henry Jackson, Washington; Patrick Leahy, Vermont; Lloyd Bentsen, Texas. The Democratic members of the House Select Committee on Intelligence are Edward Boland (chairman), Massachusetts; Clement Zablocki, Wisconsin; Charles Rose, North Carolina; Romano Mazzoli, Kentucky; Norman Mineta, California; Wyche Fowler Jr., Georgia; Lee Hamilton, Indiana; Albert Gore Jr., Tennessee; Bob Stump, Arizona. The Republican members are J. Kenneth Robinson, Virginia; John Ashbrook, Ohio; Robert McClory, Illinois; G. William Whitehurst, Virginia; C.W. Bill Young, Florida.

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back across the Coco River. Nicaragua relocated thousands of Miskitos in February in order, the government said, to remove them from what has become a combat zone. Critics contend that the Nicaraguan government alienated the Miskitos and then forcibly relocated them because it feared the Indians might side with a U.S.-backed invading force.

Recruiting ethnic minorities to help foment civil wars is a strategy that the C.I.A. has used frequently in the past. By playing upon minority groups' alienation from the dominant culture, the agency enlisted them against "unfriendly" governments in Vietnam, Laos and Iraq.

In addition to the Miskitos, the former guardsmen are receiving help from Cuban exiles and mercenaries, as well as from other Nicaraguan exiles, who are recruited in Florida and trained at camps there. A Cuban exile known as "Bombillo" and Hector Fabian, the directors of one of these camps, have boasted that more than 100 of their "graduates" have slipped into Nicaragua. The stated goal of Cuban exile and right-wing Nicaraguan training camp leaders in at least one Florida camp is the overthrow of the government of Nicaragua, and Enders told several members of Congress in off-the-record meetings that the Administration is "winking" at violations of U.S. neutrality laws because the exile groups are part of the covert operation.

The U.S.-sponsored covert activities are centered in an almost inaccessible region in Nicaragua from which U.S.-trained Cuban exiles launched the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. Nicaraguan officials fear that this area, which is reachable only by plane or boat, might be used as a base for a U.S.-backed war of attrition.

In his briefings of the select committees, Assistant Secretary Enders indicated that Argentine and Venezuelan security personnel would carry out the early stages of the clandestine operation, with the United States assuming the costs. Independent evidence of these countries' involvement emerged when Nicaraguan government leaders accused Venezuelan and Argentine officials of backing a counterrevolutionary group called the Nicaraguan Democratic Union-Revolutionary Armed Forces of Nicaragua (U.D.N.-F.A.R.N.). In January, Nicaraguan security forces arrested the group's chief of operations, William Baltodano. At a press conference called by the Nicaraguan government on January 13, Baltodano named as co-conspirators three Venezuelan diplomats stationed in Managua and one Venezuelan intelligence agent inside Nicaragua. Baltodano said that the Venezuelans, using embassy cover, helped plan the group's espionage operations against Nicaragua. He also told of traveling to Argentina late last year and meeting with two high-ranking officers of the Argentine Army, who gave him and his colleagues $50,000 to buy arms. The purchases were subsequently made in Miami, and the arms were shipped to the group's main bases in Honduras, with the Honduran Special Security Forces acting as a conduit. Spokesmen for the foreign ministries of Venezuela and Argentina denied Baltodano's allegations, but five Venezuelan envoys left Nicaragua and the Argentine ambassador was recalled.

Baltodano, a demolitions expert, was charged with conspiring to bomb a cement factory and an oil refinery near Managua. Before his arrest, he had traveled throughout Central America using false documents provided by the Honduran Intelligence Service. He also visited Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina and the United States seeking support for the U.D.N.-F.A.R.N.

On February 5, *The Los Angeles Times*, citing a Congressional source, reported that the first members of a contingent of fifty Argentine paramilitary personnel had arrived in Central America last November. Their purpose is to train Nicaraguan exiles fighting to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. On February 3, Sam Donaldson of ABC News, citing another Congressional source, said that the Administration had approached Argentine officials and requested that they send men posing as freedom fighters to infiltrate opposition groups in Nicaragua.

At a November 2, 1981, Washington luncheon in his honor, Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri, who has since become President of Argentina, said, "The first world war was a confrontation of armies, the second was a confrontation of nations and the third will be a confrontation of ideologies." He gave strong backing to the Reagan Administration's policy of combating Cuban and Nicaraguan subversion in the hemisphere. Attending the luncheon were Enders, Sanchez, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Edward Meyer.

Last December, the Administration's lobbying efforts resulted in the lifting of the 1978 ban on arms sales to Argentina, thus opening the way for Argentine officers to train again at U.S. military bases.

On February 9, following still another briefing of the intelligence committees, rumors of impending actions on Nicaragua and throughout the Caribbean began circulating in Congress. Both Congressional and middle-level State Department sources conceded that there is a good deal more to U.S. plans than the few facts that we have reported here. □

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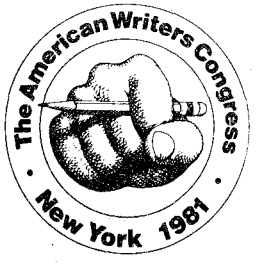

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Who Decides What is History?

NELL IRVIN PAINTER

If history is the interpreting of the past, then everyone who has a hand in making the past or shaping its interpretations decides what history is. Most people influence history by generating primary sources. They give their ages and incomes to the census taker, correspond with their creditors, write in their diaries and make their wills. Heirs decide what history is when they deposit the letters of a Confederate great-aunt in the state archives (perhaps ignoring the scrapbook of her half-brother, the barber). Historians read in the archives and fashion their interpretations of the past.

Then comes the winnowing process of publication, reception and incorporation. Editors decide which manuscripts to publish; reviewers accept this book or that and recommend it to readers; readers favor some interpretations over others; then, textbook writers incorporate these acceptable interpretations into their syntheses, which may or may not be adopted by school boards. The steps are many and varied. Without belittling any part of the complicated process of deciding what history is, I'm going to look closely at the part that follows upon publication and begin with the two groups of people Herbert Gutman mentioned in *The Nation* last November 21: historians and ordinary readers.

Gutman asked, "Whatever happened to history?" and he noted that historians and nonhistorians have very different conceptions of American history. Characterizing the failure of recent historical scholarship to affect the way ordinary citizens view American history, Gutman observed, "It was as if the American history written in the 1960s and 1970s had been penned in a foreign language and had probed the national experiences of Albania, New Zealand and Zambia."

While historians have come to see a plural of American pasts that include the separate histories of blacks, workers and women, nonhistorians seem still to carry around a chronicle of campaigns and administrations of great white men. This chronicle is part of the older synthesis traditionally taught in schools—a synthesis which stresses consensus and assimilation, notions by now discredited among professional historians. But textbooks haven't caught up with the new historical writing. And textbooks teach most Americans what they know and believe about American history. For most nonhistorians, textbooks decide what history is and is not.

At the same time that textbooks decide what history is, they also provide a powerful version of the collective past and usually end by validating the present. Many historians would like textbook history to reflect the varied experiences of different races, classes and sexes in America, but the difficulty of doing so is as much ideological and economic as it is historiographical. The more textbooks speak of blacks, the more likely they are to mention the great American failing, racism. The more they mention failings, the less attractive they are to school boards. What publisher would commission a textbook that no school board would buy? If new historical interpretations, no matter how accurate, are to change how large numbers of Americans think about their history, they must gain acceptance and incorporation.

Although what I'm about to say also applies, to some extent, to both women's history and labor history, I am going to concentrate on the issue of Afro-American history.

The field of Afro-American history has grown at a tremendous rate in the last two decades, and the writing has altered the way most professional historians think about American history. Blacks are no longer the invisible people of American history, and even white undergraduates are likely by now to have heard the name of Frederick Douglass.

Yet most nonhistorians still have little idea of what blacks thought in the past or that they thought at all. Knowing nothing, for instance, of the debate that took place among free blacks in the 1850s about appropriate responses to slavery and their own deteriorating situation, white nonhistorians are likely to assume that it never took place. In fact, the questions that these discussions posed reappeared later in the nineteenth century and again in the early twentieth. The issues are fundamental to Afro-American political thought. In its simplest terms, the 1850s debate matched Frederick Douglass against Martin Delany. Douglass leaned toward forging coalitions with well-meaning yet prejudiced whites. Delany favored self-reliant action, even though blacks were terribly poor. He explored the possibility of voluntary expatriation, a solution to the race problem that has had several vogues despite its impracticality.

In *There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), a recent book on the history of Afro-Americans, Vincent Harding rightfully gives a good deal of attention to this debate. His treatment of both positions is accurate and sensitive. By probing the debate in depth, Harding makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of Afro-American intellectual history and politics. On this issue and throughout this book, Harding puts black people at the center of his attention and discusses their concerns fairly and completely. It is this focusing squarely on blacks, I suspect, that has thrown white readers and reviewers off balance.

Harding's narrative begins in Africa, with a second-person-plural evocation of the African homeland, "where the verdant forests and tropical bush gave way gradually to the sandy stretches of the Guinea coast." Chapter names resonate with mythic phrases: "Beyond the North Star," "On Jordan's Stormy Banks," and they divide according to a black-centered periodization. Ending on a hopeful note in 1865, the last chapter closes with newly free blacks thanking the God "who had made it possible for them, and all who lived before them, to come so far and stand so firm in the deep red flooding of Jordan."

Despite its impeccable scholarship, *There Is a River* has failed to gain approval in important reviews. Books win acceptance in a variety of ways, but easily the most visible of these is by means of positive and well-placed reviews. The reviewers are usually senior historians at major universities whose views on the past are accepted by large numbers of readers and incorporated into textbooks. These histo-

Nell Irvin Painter is the author of Exodusters *(Alfred A. Knopf) and* The Narrative of Hosea Hudson *(Harvard University Press). She teaches history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

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rians enjoy access to the influential book pages such as *The New York Times Book Review* and *The New York Review of Books*. (In the case of Harding's book, however, *NYRB* is not a good example, for few reviews of books about blacks and no black historians—not even the few dazzling exceptions who are over 50, productive and otherwise suited to grace its pages—ever appear there.) In the scholarly journals where younger historians have more of a say, black historians will doubtless review *There Is a River*. But the big time remains beyond the reach of most black historians, if only because of their relative youth.

This means that the important early reviewers of *There Is a River* have not been black, and they have found the book hard to take. Its celebratory tone is not to their taste, and they dislike what they call its lack of objectivity. They fault it for down-playing differences among blacks, for favoring racial separation and for relegating whites to a shadowy backdrop. They see the book as a call to arms and its author as a relic of the 1960s. They want Harding to speak less about widespread resistance among blacks and more about why there were so few slave revolts in the antebellum South. Their criticisms point not only to their troubles with this particular book but to a basic problem in black history: black and white historians sometimes differ as to what is important.

Here I wish my vocabulary contained more nuanced terms to describe shades of opinion, for "black" and "white" are far too simplistic to be accurate. Not all blacks, most notably the neoconservatives, share the orientation that I'm calling "black." And not all whites hold what I'm calling "white" views; Lawrence Levine and Herbert Gutman, for instance, are able to think about history in what I'd call "black" ways. With that caveat, I'm going to say that black historians and white historians are receiving *There Is a River* in different ways, and that these differences are instructive.

The black historians I have spoken with seem fairly comfortable with Harding's interpretation. They accept his central metaphor, the river of struggle that unites all black Americans and makes them a people. They agree that blacks generally resisted rather than acquiesced in slavery and inferiority. Black historians quibble little with Harding's virtual identification of the black experience with the black struggle or with his use of the singular in both phrases. Pleased with Harding's preoccupation with blacks, they seem not to mind the absence of detailed discussions of contemporary whites in his book. They have reservations about the book's heroic tone, but those are reservations, not fundamental objections. By and large they are pleased with the book because it speaks of what blacks were doing and saying instead of picking away at supposed shortcomings and deviations.

For the last several years, black scholars, and not just historians, have felt that whites tend to concentrate on three aspects of black life: inferiority, deviance and dependence on whites. Whether or not this is a fair charge to level at historians, it is most certainly an accurate reading of the way blacks appear in American history as most nonhistorians know it, and Harding's white reviewers definitely seem to share such estimations about black people. They are uncomfortable with Harding's book because his interpretation of the river of black struggle runs counter to what they and most Americans take for granted about race.

That is why I doubt that Harding's explanation of black life will gain currency or be incorporated into textbooks. Even if Harding's interpretation were to appear miraculously overnight in textbooks, school boards steeped in traditional assumptions about blacks would reject the texts. If the great majority decides what history is, then *There Is a River* is not history, at least not in the short run.

But the state of race relations and the writing of textbooks are not static, or *There Is a River* would be history only for black readers and the saving remnant of whites. Things do change and so do textbooks. Already, recent efforts such as *A People and a Nation** have incorporated new historical writing, including Afro-American history (but not yet Vincent Harding). If such textbooks reach wide audiences, the present generation of high school students and undergraduates may well take the next step and decide that history includes Harding's autonomous and resisting black people. But as much as I would like white assumptions about race to more nearly ap-

**A People and a Nation*, Houghton Mifflin, 1982, edited by Mary Beth Norton, David M. Katzman, Paul D. Escott, Howard P. Chudacoff, Thomas G. Paterson and William M. Tuttle Jr.

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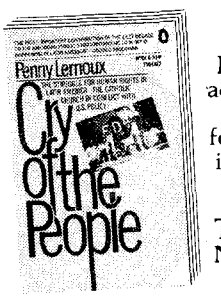

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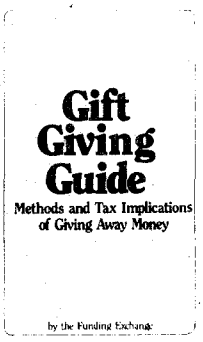

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proximate blacks', I'm afraid that the present political climate tends in the opposite direction. Historians and nonhistorians are likely to continue to decide that history is vastly different things, at least until the political mood changes and pluralism comes back into favor. □

Doris in Orbit

ALICE K. TURNER

THE MAKING OF THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR PLANET 8. *By Doris Lessing. Alfred A. Knopf. 145 pp. $11.95.*

In her recent series of "space fictions," generically titled *Canopus in Argos: Archives*, Doris Lessing frequently appears to be twitting her admirers, challenging them, with the literary equivalent of a Mona Lisa smile, to put up or get out. She is quite aware of the consternation the series has created and has now taken to addressing readers directly in exasperated, somewhat gnomic prefaces and afterwords, while insuring that the effort involved in putting up becomes ever more arduous. She's enjoying herself. Originally, there were to have been five of these *Argos* novels (so that with this, the fourth, the end was in sight, to the relief of many), but with the bit in her teeth, there may be no stopping her. Disdain for the conventional novels she once wrote so masterfully shows up in these extramural remarks, and though it's not likely that science fiction or experimental-novel fans will clasp her to their bosoms, she hardly needs them.

The story so far: Three sets of space invaders have colonial or exploitative interests in our Earth, and have indeed been meddling with us since about the Pliocene Epoch. The Northern Hemisphere has been colonized by representatives from Canopus, a high-minded group of *pukka sahibs* concerned about the planet and about the various breeding and teaching programs they have devised for us.

The Sirians control the Southern Hemisphere in a much more bureaucratic and less responsible manner, tending to refer to the natives as "animals" and to be dispassionate—we would say callous—in their experiments with agriculture, genetics and social structures. The colonial parallels are obvious. Canopus feels superior to Sirius (Sirians are not *pukka*), and Sirians are envious, resentful and respectful of Canopeans.

Meanwhile, acting against everybody's interests, a crew of "low-grade space pirates" (Lessing's phrase in one of those prefaces) is hard at work pillaging, raping, looting and carrying on as space pirates will. These villains represent Shammat, and, as you can easily imagine, they've had quite an influence here on Rohanda—or Shikasta, as the Canopeans insist on calling us now that we've fallen from Grace.

The extraterrestrials zip around in spacecraft (UFOs, of course), but they can also move in a more subtle way through the six Zones that wrap us like the layers of an onion. Zone Six is similar to the limbo or purgatory that other writers and religionists have given us, and with each successive realm, the atmosphere grows airier and more refined. The soul struggles upward, mostly in the second book of this series, *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four, and Five*, a charming allegory of physical and spiritual love, which is the only novel in the series that a non-Lessingite might conceivably want to read and which has very little to do with the others or with this summary.

Shikasta, the shortened title of the first book, gave us the history of our planet from about the paleolithic period up through World War III (you remember World War III: it turned up in *The Four-Gated City* and in several novels that followed). Much of this is familiar to us from the Bible and related Middle Eastern literature, while more comes from the instructive writings of Erich von Daniken, Charles Berlitz, Charles Forte and other promoters of alien influence. Through the reports of Canopean agents, we learn of the Fall of Man and the rise of cruelty, bigotry, obscurantism, ignorance and suffering. Some of this is Shammat's fault, but we've done fairly well on our own.

The third book, *The Sirian Experiments*, takes us through some of the same material but in a more personal way. The events are seen through the eyes of a Sirian agent, a sort of Martha Quest figure who is well meaning but

Alice K. Turner is fiction editor of Playboy *magazine.*

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often fed up and at fault, and who comes to share, slowly, some of the Canopeans' concern for us. This book explores colonial attitudes, a longtime Lessing concern, from the point of view of the colonists. Both White Man's Burden and "wog" attitudes show up, with missionary zeal on the high side and the worst aspects of slavery on the low.

The Making of the Representative for Planet 8, the book more or less under review (less rather than more, for reasons I'll get to), is very short. Thank God in Her mercy for that, for it is so grim, so relentless, so actually painful to read, that 122 pages is more than enough. This time, the point of view is that of the colonized. Planet 8 is the supposedly temporary home to a group of human beings who are being readied by Canopus for removal to Rohanda as genetic seed material, just as soon as conditions are right. But conditions never do become right—instead Rohanda, as we know from the earlier books, goes from bad to worse. Planet 8 freezes, and Canopus permits the colonists to freeze with it, sending an agent, Johor (familiar to us from the first book), to encourage the settlers to hold out against death longer than most of them want to. But they do die, and their souls soar joyfully upward.

That's it. Just the cold, bare bones of a straightforward narrative of suffering, betrayal and despair—and then that ending. Philosophically, it's a puzzler. For most of the book, I was dead certain that its author was offering an homage, forty years after the publication of *The Myth of Sisyphus*, to Albert Camus's uplifting brand of romantic existentialism, the call to clear thinking and right conduct in the face of an absurd universe with no Paradise or Rohanda in the offing. But then how to explain the hearts and flowers? One expects Steve Martin to break out in a chorus of "Pennies from Heaven" as he is reprieved from the gallows.

Even though I know the details of Lessing's universe, and that she appears to believe in an afterlife, a sort of reincarnation and a journey toward salvation, I find that ending hard to figure out. If the settlers had given up earlier, would they not have been saved? What happened to the ones that did give up? What if their motives were altruistic, as with Captain Oates on Robert Scott's expedition to the South Pole, who walked off into a blizzard so as not to delay his colleagues? Why was Johor hanging around anyway? Just checking out the results of the Canopean experiment on Planet 8—seeing if this stock takes well to being frozen? Beats me. Camus would have despised it. But he would have liked what comes next.

Mona Lessing is not about to explain herself to us, but she is willing to add a 23-page afterword in order to pad the book for her American publisher ("But you know that we can take only big books seriously," says Mr. Gottlieb at Knopf). This turns out to be an essay on the polar expeditions of Scott and Roald Amundsen. Aha, we say. But we are wrong. No, this isn't an afterword to Book Four, *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*, at all; it is instead a misplaced *fore*word to Book Three, *The Sirian Experiments*. And the author reserves a special sneer for "casual or literal-minded readers" who insist on connecting the suffering and freezing to death of Scott's band with the suffering and freezing to death of Planet 8, rather than with the adventures of Ambien II of Sirius in Atlantis and Aztec America.

Trying not to be casual or literal-minded, I set to work trying to apply this essay (and it is a brilliant essay, out of context) to *The Sirian Experiments*. Some points seemed apt: she compares Amundsen's efficient, practical, colorless (surely Canopean?) approach, which won the Pole but lost the audience, with the lofty, exalted emotionalism that fired the very badly prepared Scott team and made lasting heroes of Captain Oates, the noble but whacko Edward Wilson, with his yen for King Emperor penguin eggs, and the rest of the band of gallant bumblers.

Yes, bumblers. For Lessing wants to remind us that history is constantly revised. World War I ended that era of nineteenth-century romantic endeavor, and to our modern eye, Scott can be considered a damn fool. One moment the Gang of Four are cultural leaders, the next they are disgraced. Creationism, a laughingstock yesterday, is so powerful a belief today that fifteen states want to teach it in the public schools. "The heresies of one year are the pieties of the next," says Doris Lessing.

Well, sure. And Ambien II does go through quite a few shifts of perception and atmosphere in *The Sirian Experiments* (which is not exactly under review here, sorry, but Lessing is causing the difficulty, not me; you can catch the book soon in a Vintage paperback). And some of the sacred practices of the Aztecs seem horrible to us, as ours would to them. There is a connection, perhaps, in that both essay and book are really about the nineteenth century, the high point of uncomplicated colonial endeavor, national rivalry and patriotic heroism. The spirit of the times has changed.

But there she is, smiling again. It's

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pointless to go on with the exercise. Quite a number of people might contend that it's equally pointless to go on with this series, which seems to get odder and harder to read with each book. To that I can only say that, despite recent appearances, Doris Lessing really is a major author. She is one of the very few writers in the world who are writing about the world, who are willing to tackle the Big Subjects: history, politics, the working of the human mind, the way we treat one another. She has been through a lot, and she has taken us through a lot. She has written two books, *The Golden Notebook* and *The Four-Gated City*, that have meant a great deal to a great many people. And perhaps we should indulge her whim.

But next time I hope she writes about Shammat. Pirates are a lot more fun than people freezing to death. □

Not So Happy Days

BRINA CAPLAN

BRAIDED LIVES. *By Marge Piercy. Summit Books. 441 pp. $15.50.*

The 1950s may not seem long ago, but they are long ago enough to have become history, the object of academic speculation and commercial nostalgia. On campus, scholars revise Eisenhower's Presidential reputation. On television, loops of tape endlessly reincarnate *Happy Days* and bring us, in prime time, the joys of Elvis and the sorrows of Marilyn. But anyone who came of age during the McCarthy-Eisenhower era is likely to need neither revision nor television. Simple recall suffices: the way we were is not a way we want to be again.

As Marge Piercy's seventh novel, *Braided Lives*, reminds us, growing up female in the 1950s hurt. Even the fashions were punitive—shoes with pencil-point toes, skirts as tight as mummy windings or flared so as to require lofting by layers of starched, scratchy crinolines. Thirty years later, the then-fashionable distortions of female anatomy must seem comic. "A decent bra in 1953," Piercy's narrator, Jill Stuart, reports, "is nearer to an armor breastplate than to a silky froth of lingerie. It holds the breasts apart, forward and out as if setting up a couple of moon shots." Yet what Jill finds in recollection unlaughable still is the distortion of women's ambitions, impulses and self-regard. At 43, she wonders how she managed to live through ages 16 to 22. Her remembrance of a working-class childhood in Detroit, college years in Ann Arbor and a writer's life in New York City is, in fact, a survivor's retrospective. Like all narratives of survival, *Braided Lives* affects us by contrast—by distinctions made between then and now, between those who have and have not survived and, most important, between the subtleties of individual development and the more general movement of history.

In 1953, sex is for marriage, not because, as the Victorians saw it, the act is so deeply profane that only sanctification makes it endurable. Instead, in the utilitarian 1950s, sexuality gives women their one legitimate hold on power. They are expected, with the goad of pleasure, to herd men into families. This herding ritual, as Jill observes it, is a blind-end game. A too-early marriage transforms her childhood best friend from a street-wise adventurer into "a housewife padding around in slip and feather mules, a permanent whine in her voice and a puzzled frown pulling at her wide mouth." At her home, the power derived from earning belongs to Jill's father; her industrious, beleaguered mother "works for free." And so Mrs. Stuart battles for control of family affairs through bluster and the surreptitious scheming of the weak. Although a child of her time, by age 16 Jill is already planning an escape into the future.

Her own efforts pay for four years at the University of Michigan, where thoughtfulness, disparaged at home, proves an asset, and friendly voices help her articulate her own native radicalism. But there is other tuition to be paid, at a different price. The same destructive ambivalence that caused high school boys to pursue—and then to scorn—"girls who do" infects every male-female relationship of Jill's college years. Men bully and wheedle, disregard women's pain and ignore the gravity of childbearing. Once discovered, sex nonetheless remains a sweet release—no other contemporary novelist writes about women's sexual pleasures with Piercy's

Brina Caplan writes regularly on fiction for The Nation.

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good-humored, unmuddied sensuality—and Jill does enjoy an almost easy relationship with a factory worker in Ann Arbor. His respect for her independence, however, is offset both by his line of night work, burglary, and by his exploitative racism. In Jill's experience, men want not "just one thing" from the women they love; they want a soul-eviscerating everything.

The great passions of her life become her poetry, her politics and her friendships. She has discovered "the core of falsity in the search for love: a woman gives herself to a man as if that got rid of the problem of making an identity." But most women she knows, including those with whom she shares political opinions, do not agree. Indeed, the woman she most loves, her cousin and sometime roommate, Donna, is haunted by a despair that she believes only marriage can alleviate. Although their intimacy provides them both with safe harbor during troubled times, its intensity inevitably frightens Donna, who then cools and resumes cruising for a husband. Her coolness, Jill's fervor; her self-loathing, Jill's self-sufficiency are played off against each other in a counterpoint of crises—the last of which is the unwanted pregnancy that ends Donna's life.

Of the lives that intertwine with Jill's to produce *Braided Lives*, her own is virtually the one unbroken strand: Howie, her New York lover and former high school friend, dies in a Ku Klux Klan ambush; Donna's death is fated by her marriage to a woman-hater; women friends disappear into prison, asylums, the insularity of serial baby-bearing. "I do not know a girl who does not say," Jill remarks early in her story, " 'I don't want to live like my mother.'. . . Is it our mothers, ourselves or our men who mold us?" Jill alone has escaped to tell us, and her answers implicate all three agents. Certainly, this account of women's lives during the 1950s does not relieve them of responsibility for preserving the status quo. Jill recounts with bemusement, for example, how in dormitory confessions her college friends, preferring contest to mutuality, claimed for themselves virginities that could appear and disappear and reappear to suit the competitive moment.

If, in *Braided Lives*, Piercy's humor has satiric bite, her dialogue achieves a more vicious edge. Jill's mother and lovers tend to go at her in butchering arguments that appear to aim at total annihilation: " 'You poor blind ugly

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slut! You dirty little gutter worm living on your own shit!'" screams the mother at the daughter who has confronted her about repainting a room. Despite their compelling momentum, such scenes transport a puzzling excess, too particular and too poisoned to be explained away by a generalized feminist vision. Indeed, excess may be the one fault of this energetic novel, which in the course of nearly 450 pages manages to accommodate almost every humiliation to which women are liable: there are rapes, memories of childhood seduction, psychological manipulation, verbal and physical abuse, the agony of illegal abortion and exploitation on and off the job. Although, given Piercy's accuracy of eye and ear, any one incident is likely to be absorbing, the total catalogue is somehow numbing. Piercy might well have kept in mind Jill's weary reaction to her friend Stephanie's rendition of a childhood of horrors. Stephanie's story, Jill remarks, "has beaten me into a submission of the imagination." □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Circle of Deceit
One From the Heart
Sleeping Dogs

It would be easier to review *Circle of Deceit* if I could decide how I feel about it. Visually, and in terms of punishing excitement, it is masterful, but I am not at all sure what the film means to say, and am inclined to blame the direction of Volker Schlöndorff (who also did *The Tin Drum*) for my ambivalence.

We have been told that Schlöndorff changed his mind about the picture while he was shooting it. He had gone to Beirut to make a politically committed film (based on a novel by Nicolas Born) about the war in Lebanon, but when he came to work on it he discovered, understandably, that he could align himself with none of the antagonists in this most confused of conflicts. Therefore he shifted the emphasis of his movie toward the inner struggles of the protagonist, a German reporter named Georg Laschen (Bruno Ganz).

But then we run into the problem that Laschen's state of mind is as ill defined as are the causes and stakes of the Lebanese war. He is eager enough to take the Beirut assignment since it lets him escape from a marriage that is disintegrating, for reasons that are also murky. Once on the scene, angry and disoriented, he exposes himself—it would seem suicidally—to the vicious street fighting and resumes an affair with an old flame, now the widow of a Lebanese businessman. Laschen, who feels guilty because he is uninvolved, does manage to stab a man to death during a melee in a bomb shelter, but why he had reason to do so I could not tell in the confusion. He then flies out of Lebanon, flings his job in the faces of his assembled editors and drives home in the same torrential rain that was pouring down when he left town. It seems that the bloodshed and destruction do little to relieve the discontent that gnaws like a fox at Herr Laschen's bosom.

Circle of Deceit is a convincing demonstration of the well-known fact that one cannot escape oneself by running away, and Ganz is much gifted in the depiction of inner torment (*Knife in the Head, Nosferatu,* etc.). But this statement seems an insufficient motive given the circumstances under which the picture was made. Beirut was a battleground at the time the German company was on location there. However, none of the violence on the screen is real. Schlöndorff was assigned safe areas in the ruined city, where he was at liberty to set off dynamite, dispose mangled bodies and orchestrate machine-gun and sniper fire amid sandbag emplacements and burning vehicles. This facsimile is brilliantly managed; you must keep reminding yourself that actual combat footage is never this coherent, never so well composed or operatically lighted, that in any case Ganz would not be leaping about in the thick of it if the carnage were real.

Now, simulated warfare is nothing new on the screen; we have known since *The Big Parade* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* that it is a thing at which the movies excel. But never before has a director depicted his fictionalized war in the very place and at the very time of a real war. In this case, real corpses lay on other streets, real shells ripped through the walls of other buildings and the cast of *Circle of Deceit*, save for the small contingent of professional actors, were Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian gunmen who yesterday were living the parts they played for Schlöndorff and tomorrow, more than likely, would be at the work again.

Why did they consent to the charade? No doubt because each faction hoped that the righteousness of its cause would be made manifest in fiction, as it had not been in fact. Or perhaps they were proud of their valor, proud of the ruthlessness with which they slaughtered their prey and set fire to the gasoline-soaked bodies. It is a shocking kind of make-believe, and Schlöndorff has said that he meant it so.

But shocking to what end? Laschen for all Ganz's attempts to give him moral stature, is a self-concerned man, too shallow to occupy center stage in this carnage. He fancies himself tough (he wears a sheath knife strapped to his calf), but what holds him in Beirut is less the need to come to terms with this war than the attraction of a woman who seems to understand him better than does his wife. When she shows that she understands him only too well and is tougher than he can ever pretend to be, he is ready enough to catch a plane. True, he is sickened by the stink of death and ashamed of himself for exploiting it, but he is hardly the first reporter, in fact or fiction, to gag on his own copy.

Perhaps Schlöndorff thought that by filming a dramatically heightened and intensified war in surroundings where war already existed, he could bring home to us at last what was really involved. If so, I believe he has miscalculated. We have all, eating our dinners before the TV, seen episodes and tableaux at least as devastating as anything provided by *Circle of Deceit*. And we could not tell ourselves that the blood and shattered bones were cosmetic. Schlöndorff piles the imitation of terror and violence on top of their reality, hoping thus, I suspect, to evoke a general cry of "enough." I doubt that it works that way. We have long since had our fill of this obscenity, and we have not rebelled. Instead, we have become inured, even habituated, to it. Feeding us more of the same is of no avail. I don't know what will cure our violent ways, but I think we can be certain that inventing violence will not do it.

One From the Heart is an innocent sort of venture; Francis Ford Coppola made it to show off the resources of his Zoetrope Studios. The idea was to create in this palace of optical tricks a romantic comedy as it might have looked on a Broadway musical stage of fifty years ago. We are said to be in Las

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Vegas over a Fourth of July weekend, and the sets, the costumes, the props and the lighting are of a calculated vulgarity that raises them to the status of pop art. The action adheres to conventions of the stage: curtains open and close; scrims rise and fall; a telephone conversation is conducted on a split stage, instead of by cutting back and forth between speakers as is the screen method. It is all a pleasant conceit, and exhibits the prowess of Zoetrope to great advantage.

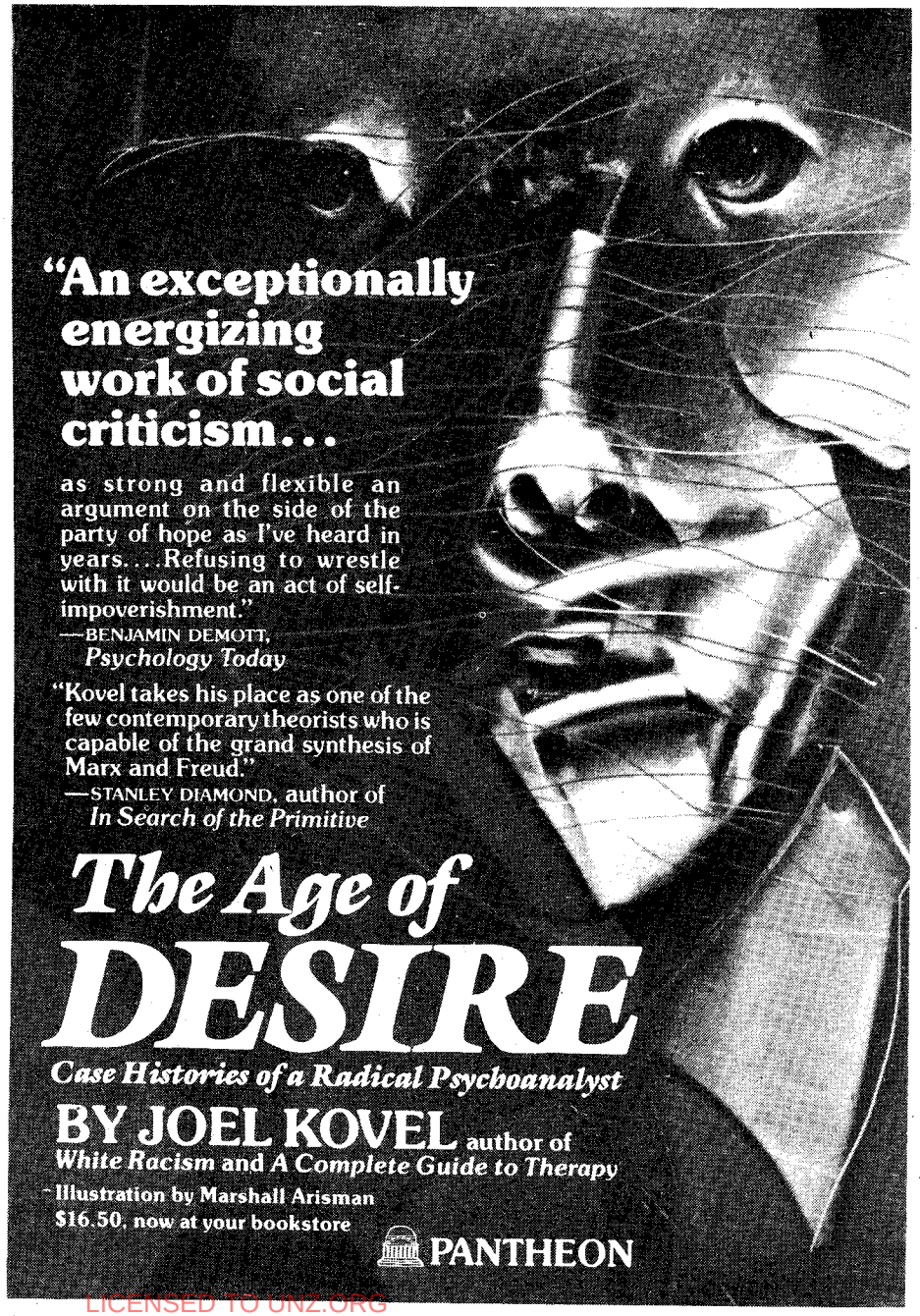
But, alas, *One From the Heart* also offers characters and a plot. It is a mistake, I think, when you want to provide a sparkling comedy, to stipulate that the hero and heroine are persons of such sodden mediocrity that they can no longer bear the sight of each other. Their mutual distaste is almost certain to infect the audience, and there is little that even performers as solid as Frederic Forrest (Hank) and Teri Garr (Frannie) have previously shown themselves to be can do about it. Hank goes off for a while with a circus siren (Nastassia Kinski); Frannie tries a fling with a cafe waiter who exerts a rather watery Latin charm (Raul Julia), but these escapades do not lift the principals' leaden spirits. The movie sinks from tedium into embarrassing sentimentality, and the lights mercifully go out on Zoetrope's Las Vegas.

Like Laschen in *Circle of Deceit*, the hero of *Sleeping Dogs* escapes from marital distress into war, but there the resemblance ends. The reason for Smith's domestic unease in the latter film is obvious enough—his wife has taken to sleeping with another man. He becomes embroiled in the fighting quite against his will, and the film, far from mimicking an actual war, invents one that tests one's power to sustain credulity.

The field of action is New Zealand, where, as the picture opens, a general strike is in progress. At the height of the disturbance, the fascist chief of police arranges the massacre of a platoon of his own men and the lid flies off. Within days the island is ablaze with a network of nationalist guerrillas pitted against the army, air force and special police, who are abetted in their terrorist strategies by a company of U.S. commandos flown in to subdue the minions of godless Communism.

I don't insist that this could not happen in New Zealand. We have bitter reason to know it can happen here, there and anywhere. That, indeed, is the message that Roger Donaldson, the Australian-born New Zealander who directed the movie, intends to convey. However, the movie does not gather much plausibility as it rolls along its violent way. Smith is seen to be a rather feckless chap, more irritable than aggressive, except in moments of mortal peril, when he displays the esprit of d'Artagnan. The plot catches him in an almost ludicrous web of bad luck and malign coincidence. His relationship with Bullen, his wife's lover and an implacable guerrilla leader, is the emotionally too facile one in which sworn foes become blood brothers when the chips are down. And the dialogue keeps hitting flat notes. When a picture ends with the hero dying to foil the designs of the sadistic villain, an audience is not supposed to laugh.

Sleeping Dogs is the first film made in New Zealand to reach the United States. It is a somewhat shaky start, but so were the earliest movies from Australia. Both countries have access to good actors. In Donaldson's picture, Sam Neill plays Smith; Ian Mune, who also collaborated with Arthur Baysting on the script (from a novel by Karl Stead), is Bullen; Melissa Donaldson plays Smith's wife. These three, with others in the cast, look as though they could excel with better material. Warren Oates flew in from Hollywood to play the small, key part of Colonel Willoughby, the unspeakably jocular veteran of Vietnam. □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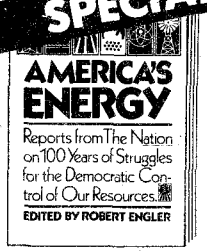
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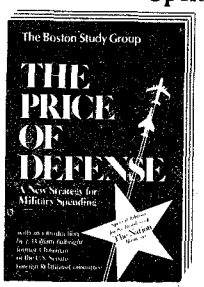

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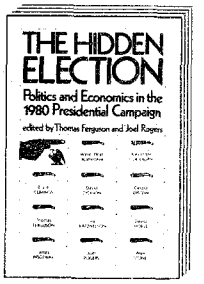
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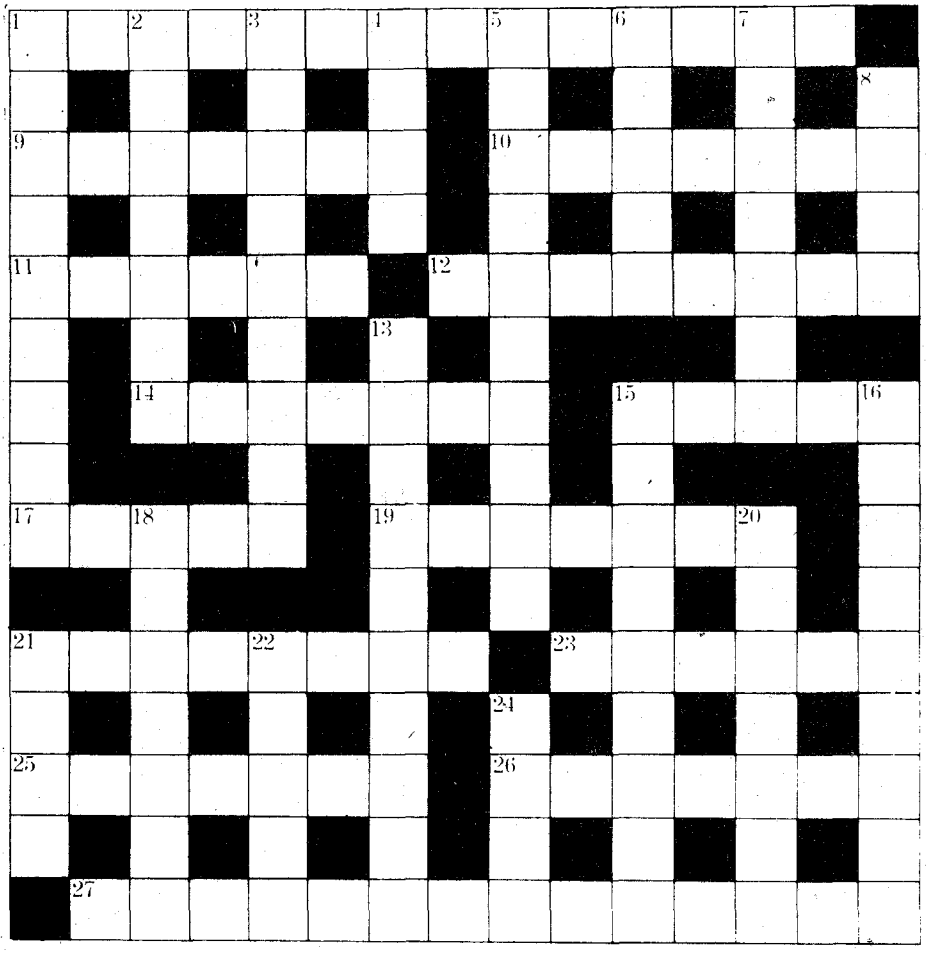
I	M	P	I	E	T	Y	■	N	E	U	T	R	O	N
V	■	P	■	R	■	S	■	T	■	L	■	A	■	E
E	L	I	J	A	H	■	C	A	M	E	L	E	E	R
A	■	N	■	C	■	I	■	L	■	S	■	L	■	A
N	I	G	H	T	T	R	A	I	N	■	W	I	L	L
D	■	■	■	S	■	R	■	Z	■	B	■	■	■	A
K	I	T	H	■	M	A	K	E	T	R	A	C	K	S
I	■	O	■	H	■	T	■	S	■	O	■	O	■	S
C	A	R	Y	A	T	I	D	■	S	C	O	N	C	E
K	■	C	■	M	■	O	■	A	■	C	■	C	■	M
I	N	H	U	M	A	N	■	P	R	O	V	E	R	B
N	■	O	■	E	■	A	■	S	■	L	■	O	■	L
G	E	N	E	R	A	L	D	E	L	I	V	E	R	Y

Crossword Puzzle No. 1905

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 I sang this way? You might have trouble explaining such to IRS. (3-6,5)
9 An English cathedral town is looking back on an old state so delightfully described. (7)
10 A good deal of the river is indeed obtained from a source. (7)
11 and 12 If you're looking for a parallel, think of "crabby." (6,2,6)
14 Part of an ear in good condition, or getting close to it. (7)
15 Circle—take it or leave it—possibly green with less colorful surroundings. (5)
17 Chevalier's girl doesn't have one—being a parasite. (5)
19 Long pieces of writing—a couple of points containing formulated statements. (7)
21 Might cause a flag to be thrown, just as I saw Jeanie. (8)
23 See 2
25 One of those pressing duties. (7)
26 Handled by one in uniform, in the main—and even more often in the city. (7)
27 Time for future action is unspecified, but it could be less propitious if it were "those" instead. (3,2,5,4)

DOWN

1 and 21 down Such a girl has to have a sister, while Clint waited in some difficulty. (9,4)
2 and 23 Is one tired of reading Blackstone to do so, as a few words of caution might? (3,4,3,3)
3 Give rise to something, else I had a drink and dined! (9)
4 Fly up with the distinctive flavor of a dynasty? (4)
5 Often painted with one or two, for example, barely present. (4,6)
6 The contents of such a trunk should be vital. (5)
7 Beginners obviously should have a dearth of faults. (7)
8 This European river suggests an association with such as Cologne. (4)
13 Play time could be especially important, as the primary sort of thing. (5,5)
15 Some entertainers might hold it to be what the key does, perhaps. (4,5)
16 Is what they spin, tops—for those who want material things. (4,5)
18 The garden variety made famous by Thurber? (7)
20 A divided region lies improperly, but is up first with a following. (7)
21 See 1 down
22 The first name in Rome. (5)
24 A revolutionary leader could obviously cause a certain amount of trouble. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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